

Tibet 2002

A Yearbook

Economy and Development

Policies and Leaders

Religion

Prisoners and Prisons

Society and Culture

Outside Tibet

Reference Section

Tibet Information Network
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Note:

- The borders on the map of Tibet shown on page 148 reflect those claimed by the PRC. This has technical reasons and should not be understood as any kind of endorsement from TIN's side.
- The first four pages of the Reference Section in this volume have been printed by mistake on white paper instead of blue paper. TIN apologises for this.

Tibet 2002 – A Yearbook

Reports from Tibet

Tibet Information Network
London

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Tibet Information Network

Tibet Information Network (TIN) is an independent news and research service that collects and distributes information about the current situation in Tibet. It was set up by Robert Barnett and Nicholas Howen in 1987. Based in London, with news-gathering centres in India and Nepal, TIN monitors political, social, economic, environmental, and human rights conditions in Tibet and then publishes the information worldwide in the form of regular news updates, briefing papers and specialist analytical reports. TIN's information comes from a variety of sources both inside and outside Tibet, from interviews with Tibetan refugees and from the monitoring of established Chinese, Tibetan and international media.

TIN's main objective is to provide a systematic, comprehensive and impartial news and information service for journalists, development agencies, human rights groups, governments, non-governmental and international organisations as well as academics and other interested parties.

In 1996 TIN was registered as a charity in the UK (No. 1057648) under the title "Tibet Information Network Trust" with the following stated aims:

- to advance the education of the public about Tibet and its people by undertaking, promoting and commissioning research into conditions and developments in and relating to Tibet
- to disseminate the results of such research to the general public, non-governmental organisations, inter-governmental organisations, governments, parliamentarians, the media and scholars in the United Kingdom and throughout the world.

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Introduction

2002 has been a year of contradictions in Tibet. Just at the beginning of the year, the Tibetan musicologist Ngawang Choephel was released after spending six years in Chinese prisons. The release of further political prisoners like Tagna Jigme Zangpo and Ngawang Choezom, which took place later in the year, seemed to confirm that China had begun to reconsider its repressive policies towards Tibetan political dissent, or at least taken notice that its poor human rights record in Tibet may harm it more internationally than the political dissent itself. Many western countries that had been conducting human rights dialogue with the Chinese government had for several years demanded the release of these and other prisoners. Though TIN's political prisoners database still recorded about 150 political incarcerations by the end of the year, in the wider picture, the number of Tibetans in prison on political charges has been in rapid decline between 1997 and 2001.

In a further sign of normalisation, Jigme Phuntsog returned to the Serthar Buddhist Institute in Kardze Prefecture, East Tibet, after what appears to have been a forced stay in the capital of Sichuan province, Chengdu. In summer 2001, TIN reported a partial destruction of the institute, in the course of which the authorities had expelled Chinese followers of Jigme Phuntsog and in particular a large number of nuns who had found here a rare opportunity to study and to live a monastic life.

But the most spectacular development took place just after Summer 2002. In September, contact between the Dalai Lama and the Chinese authorities resumed after a nine-year stalemate. A Tibetan delegation headed by the envoys of the Dalai Lama to the US and Europe, Lodi Gyari and Kelsang Gyaltsen, travelled to Tibet and China with the aim of explaining to the PRC's leadership the Dalai lama's 'middle way' approach towards the Tibetan question and thus initiate a Sino-Tibetan dialogue on a genuine autonomous status for Tibet. Though this first trip did not get tangible results, it was reported as having taken place in a "*constructive*" and "*cordial*" atmosphere and might be a first step towards a forthcoming reconciliation process.

On the other hand, the policies practiced by the Chinese authorities in Tibet remained essentially similar to those of earlier years: restrictions continue to impact on religious life, portraits of the Dalai Lama are still banned in public places and official declarations praise the presumed economic progress in Tibet, while outside urban centres

the majority of Tibetans continue to live in poverty. TIN reported the upgrading of repressive infrastructures, like the enlargement of existing prison facilities and the strengthening of border controls to Nepal.

During the year, experts on the preservation of the world's cultural heritage were alarmed by the on-going destruction of cultural monuments in Lhasa, the erosion of the historical fabric of the Tibetan capital, and the replacement of genuinely Tibetan structures with pseudo-Tibetan constructions of poor quality, unlikely to provide Tibetans with little more than the semblance of the amenities of modern life. TIN's reports on the subject pointed to the economic and political interests of the new elite as the major mover behind these developments and its consequences on the local population. Meanwhile new structures were erected which symbolise the dominance of the Chinese state over the lives of Tibetans.

The dismantling of Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche's religious and charitable network in the Lithang area in East Tibet (Sichuan province), demonstrated that the remarkable releases of political prisoners during the year could not be viewed as a general liberalisation of political practices. Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche was accused of 'terrorist' activities in a trial that did not meet any of the internationally acknowledged criteria of transparency and, despite international protest, he was sentenced to death. Many of his closest followers were jailed for at least several weeks and one of them, Lobsang Dondrub, was executed in January 2003.



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1 Economy and Development

At the latest, since the crucial Fourth Tibet Work Forum held in Beijing in June 2001, Tibet has been one of the main focuses of the People's Republic of China's (PRC) ambitious Western development drive. Both Party leader and President, Jiang Zemin and Prime Minister Zhu Rongji have declared on numerous occasions that the economic development of the Tibet Autonomous Region and other parts of the Tibetan plateau were the highest priorities for the new millennium. They also did not ignore the perceived link between economic development and 'political stability'. It is more than fifty years since the People's Liberation Army took control of the Tibetan state and the entire Tibetan cultural area with the declared intention of leading Tibet out of its presumed 'backwardness' and into a bright future marked by social and economic progress, under the leadership of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), with a 'scientific' worldview instead of one based on traditional 'superstition'. In this time, Tibet has remained one of the poorest and least developed areas in the world. This was recognised by the Chinese leadership in the early 1980s and the first measures undertaken to develop Tibet were set in motion, during which the Panchen Lama played an important role. The approach to development as conceived in the 1980s tended to be more oriented towards the satisfaction of immediate needs of the Tibetans, an approach which, in the comparatively more coercive political environment of the 1990s, was soon considered too slow and politically dangerous for the system. In contrast, today's development programmes envision the realisation of infrastructural projects of giant dimensions like the Qinghai-Lhasa railway project, displacement of complete population groups etc. Three TIN News Updates from early 2002 described the impact of these development efforts in Qinghai, the north-west part of Tibet traditionally known as Amdo, including the creation of a new urban centre in Dulan on the site of a former controversial resettlement project.

The report of Medecins sans Frontieres pulling out of Tibet provides another insight into development work in contemporary Tibet. While mega-projects of doubtful immediate value for the average Tibetan are subsidised by the state, international NGOs providing much needed help withdraw from a terrain on which political conditions make

sensible work too demanding.

A further report demonstrates that despite much publicised growth rates in Tibet, poverty remains the lot on the countryside where about 85% of the Tibetans live.

TIN NEWS STORY

TIN NEWS UPDATE, 15 JANUARY 2002 (EDITED)

New railway construction in Qinghai

TIN has received a detailed eyewitness report of a single-track railway currently under construction heading south from Huangyuan county town towards Tsoelho (Chinese: Hainan) Tibet Autonomous Prefecture (TAP) in Qinghai province. There appears to be no reference to the railway in official Chinese press reports. A railway leading into Tsoelho TAP would have a major impact on the opening up and development of the area – a significant proportion of its population is already made up of Chinese settlers.

The eyewitness report refers to the construction of tunnels alongside the highway running south from Huangyuan (Tib: Tongkor) county town and into Tsoelho prefecture. This highway follows the riverbed of a tributary of the Xichuan River (a branch of the Yellow River) before entering Tsoelho prefecture where it divides at Daotanghe, about 40km north of Chabcha county town (Ch: Gonghe/Qiabuqia). One branch heads west as National Highway 109 to Golmud and then Lhasa and the other (National Highway 214) heads south to Chabcha and Chamdo. The railway tunnels were seen in a gorge-like section of the river valley south of Huangyuan county town.

According to the report, work on the railway is still at an early stage compared to the more advanced work that has been carried out on the construction of the province's new expressway – a four-lane road that will ultimately link Lanzhou (capital of Gansu province) to Lhasa, via Xining and Golmud. The eyewitness account of infrastructure construction distinguishes between the construction of rail tunnels and tunnels built for road traffic, commenting on the difference in the width and height of the tunnel mouths, roof shape and also the elevation on which they are built (rail tracks cannot change direction or gradient as quickly as roads). One of the observers said: *"The width of the highway bed compared to the much narrower opening for rail tunnels emphasised that the tunnels were not part of highway construction."*

No reference to the railway construction south of Huangyuan has been made in official public sources as far as TIN can ascertain and the final destination of the line is not known. The route may be a short branch line from the Xining-Golmud railway into Tsoelho prefecture to stimulate industrial development in the prefecture (facilitating the transportation of raw materials, goods and people). There are three such branch lines already marked on provincial maps (Xining-Datong; Ha'ergai-Reshui coal mine; and Chahanruo-Chaka [Tib: Tsakha] salt lake). If the railway runs as far as Chabcha, which is likely, it will be near the course of the Machu (Huanghe; Yellow River), upon which the large-scale, state-funded Lijiaxia and Longyangxia dams and hydropower stations are built. Lijiaxia and Longyangxia areas have been separated from their local county administration and designated as special 'administrative committees'. Lijiaxia, in the east of Tsoelho bordering Malho (Ch: Huangnan) TAP and Haidong (Tib: Tsoshar) prefectures, comes under the direct jurisdiction of

the province, while Longyangxia, near Chabcha, is a county-level unit (Qinghai Statistical Yearbook, 2000). Both areas are of key regional importance for industrial development.

The tunnel construction south of Huangyuan could also be the beginning of a second railway linking Xining to Tsakha salt lake, running parallel to National Highway 109 south of Lake Kokonor (Qinghai Hu), through Tsoelho and up to the main line of the Xining-Golmud railway at Chahanruo, or an alternative route all the way to Golmud, cutting across Tsonub (Ch: Haixi) prefecture. The current railway to Golmud runs to the north of the lake, west to Terlenkha (Ch: Delingha) and then southwest to Golmud. The availability of a second railway, creating a loop-line to either Tsakha or Golmud, would greatly enhance the potential for movement of materials and people, including military personnel and equipment, in the region.



Road construction on the Tibetan plateau.

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Whichever route the railway takes, it will have a major impact on Tsoholo TAP. Tsoholo has the largest population of all TAPs in Qinghai and has already been more affected by immigration and development than most of the province due its close proximity and relatively easy access from Xining and Haidong. The land available for cultivation in the northern part of the prefecture has turned Tsoholo into an important wheat producing area, while its water and mineral resources are being developed in line with state plans for resource extraction and industrialisation. According to the PRC 1990 Census, 54 per cent of Tsoholo's population was Tibetan. Enhanced infrastructure, combined with state plans to extract resources and develop urban centres, will almost certainly involve further immigration of Chinese workers to the area.

The same observers reported on work being carried out on the new four-lane expressway linking Lanzhou to Xining and Golmud. The section between Xining and Golmud will follow the route of the current road (#109), south of Kokonor Lake, via Tulan (Ch: Dulan) county, but will be able to handle significantly higher traffic volumes at greater speed. Some of the construction, including the stretch south of Huangyuan, is new, while in other sections the existing road is being widened and paved. The new highway from Huangyuan south as far as Daotanghe in

Tsoholo is due to be completed this year (Qinghai Daily, 27 November 2001), although this could be an optimistic target as, according to the eyewitness report, there is still *"a tremendous amount of work left to do"*. The first section of the Xining-Lanzhou expressway, running between Xining and Ping'an (Tib: Tsongkhakhar) county, was officially *"opened to traffic"* in July 2001 (tibetinfo.com, 4 July 2001), but does not yet appear to be in full use.

Infrastructure construction in Tibetan areas of the People's Republic of China is seen as crucial to the fulfilment of state plans to develop the western regions of China. The Chinese authorities are pushing forward with the construction of the Golmud-Lhasa railway, which will effectively link the Tibetan capital to the Chinese hinterland via Lanzhou city in Gansu province. Deputy minister for railways Sun Yongfu has said that the first section of track, from Golmud to Wangkun (about 150km), will be laid by the end of 2002. By the end of 2005, track will be laid from Wangkun to Amdo (Ch: Anduo) county town in Nagchu (Ch: Naqu) prefecture, TAR, (roughly 550km), reportedly the most difficult section of the railway due to altitude and permafrost. The track from Amdo to Lhasa (approx. 440km) will be laid by November 2006 and *"a completed system will be in place by the end of June 2007"* (People's Railway News, 20 November 2001).

TIN NEWS STORY

TIN NEWS UPDATE, 22 JANUARY 2002 (EDITED)

County transfers facilitate industrial development in Qinghai

Two counties, Huangyuan and Huangzhong (Tib: Tongkor & Kumbum), originally in Haidong prefecture (Tib: Tsoshar), Qinghai province (Tib: Amdo), have been transferred to the direct jurisdiction of the provincial capital, Xining municipality, the main gateway to the Tibetan plateau. The transfers will provide the necessary land space for the expansion of Xining's growing industry and will also give the municipality access to vital transportation links through Huangyuan county, west to Golmud and south into Tsoholo Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture (Chin: Hainan). Xining is an important base for China's drive to develop its western regions, in particular the exploitation of resources in the Tsaidam basin. The county transfers are likely to have a significant impact on the development and demography of the Tibetan area of Tsoholo, which now shares a border with Xining municipality.

The county transfers have involved Haidong handing more than 4,200 square kilometres of land and over half a million people to Xining's jurisdiction. While none of Haidong's counties have Tibetan autonomous status, Tibetans have an important cultural and historical role in the area. Huangzhong county is the location of Kumbum monastery (Ch: Ta'er si), one of the six great Gelug monasteries, and borders Ping'an (Tib: Tsongkhakhar) county, birthplace of the 14th Dalai Lama, to the southeast. The number of Tibetans transferred to direct Xining administration will have been considerable. According to 1990 census figures, about 46,000 Tibetans were living in the area.

The administrative changes in Qinghai were approved by China's State Council in December 1999 and are likely to have been ratified at provincial level at the third session of the 9th Qinghai Province People's Congress in January 2000. The purpose of the transfer is to facilitate development in Xining, most importantly in giving the municipality the necessary land area for expansion. According to an article on Xining's official website, the county transfers have resulted in the *"economic strength"* of Xining becoming *"more robust"*, while *"the space for development has become a step more expansive"*

(www.xining.gov.cn). Prior to the changes, Xining city was squeezed into a narrow corridor at the south of the municipality, with Huangzhong and Huangyuan counties pressing in to the south and west respectively, leaving no room for growth. The new administrative structure increases Xining's land area by 125 per cent. An indication of the importance of Xining to China's plans to develop its western regions is the establishment in September 2000 of the first state-level economic zone in Qinghai province, the 'Xining Economic and Science & Technology Zone', located in the eastern quarter of Xining city.

Together, Xining municipality and Haidong prefecture only account for about two per cent of Qinghai's land area. However, according to 2000 census figures, their combined populations make up 67.5 per cent of the province's total (which is just under 5.2 million). Although the whole area is densely populated, Xining municipality was significantly more so, with 331 persons per square kilometre in 1999 (Qinghai Statistical Yearbook 2000). As a result of the county transfers, Xining's population density has dropped to 258.7 persons per square kilometre based on data from China's 2000 census (notice issued 24 April 2001 by Qinghai statistical bureau on 2000 census data, www.qhei.gov.cn). Population density in Haidong has also dropped, although only from 117 to 114.5 persons per square kilometre, due to the fact that Huangzhong county was relatively highly populated.

Haidong has lost roughly one quarter of its population as a result of the transfer of Huangyuan and Huangzhong counties, while Xining's population gain has been substantial – about 50 per cent. The transfer also represents a significant economic loss to Haidong prefecture, just over one quarter of total GDP. The resultant increase in Xining's GDP is proportionally smaller – the assimilation of both counties into Xining's economy results in a 14.7 per cent GDP increase based on 1999 data (Qinghai Statistical Yearbook 2000). Official websites are promoting the refining and smelting industries along with tourism in Huangyuan. Huangzhong is being heavily marketed as a tourist destination – with Kumbum monastery as a major attraction – with some mining support industries and livestock production. However, improved access to transportation links and land available for industrial development are likely to result in much higher economic gains from the transfer than are indicated by the two counties' GDP figures.

Although Huangyuan County has been designated by the state as a "poor county" (China's Ethnic Statistical Yearbook 2000), it is still valuable to Xining. According to Xining's official website, Huangyuan county is known as the "Qinghai-Tibet strategic pass" (www.xining.gov.cn),

indicating the importance of the county in accessing and opening up the northern and central Tibetan areas constituting much of Qinghai and the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR). Since the county transfers took place in 2000, Xining has pushed ahead with the development of infrastructure within its new borders and with construction connecting the municipality to the Tibetan areas lying to the south and west. As well as tourist expressways from Xining to Kumbum and Ping'an, a new four-lane highway is currently being built from Huangyuan to Daotanghe, where it will meet with National Highways 109 (to Golmud and Lhasa) and 214 (to Chamdo). Construction of a railway heading south from Huangyuan county town towards Tsoho TAP has also commenced since the transfers. Although there has been no apparent official mention of this rail line and it is not yet known where its final destination will be, it is certain to have a profound impact on the opening up and development of Tsoho TAP.

Haidong prefecture was founded as recently as 1987, before which its counties came under the jurisdiction of Xining. The Xining-Haidong area is the only part of Qinghai with a pre-1949 majority Chinese population – a result of long-term Chinese control, which did not extend beyond this area in any practical way until the Chinese Communist Party came to power in 1949. Immigration from other parts of China, both forced and voluntary, was a significant factor in the growth of Xining-Haidong's population from less than one million to three million between 1949 and 1990, a rate of increase that outstrips China's as a whole for the same period. One result of this has been to further reconfigure the demographic structure of the area, so that Tibetans now make up a small minority of the population.

The county transfers mean that Xining municipality now has a larger percentage of Tibetans than before (4.6% as compared to 2.7% based on 1990 census data.¹ However, Tibetans in Huangzhong and Huangyuan are now part of a smaller Tibetan minority than previously (4.6% as compared to 8.7%). The transfer will have had a negligible impact on the proportion of Tibetans within Haidong, based on 1990 census data (8.7% before; 8.6% after).

TIN NEWS STORY

TIN NEWS UPDATE, 14 FEBRUARY 2002 (EDITED)

Resettlement and urban reconstruction in former World Bank project county

Major reconstruction looks set to take place in the closest urban centre to the area of Qinghai where thousands of poor migrant farmers are to be resettled under an ambitious Chinese state project that was originally to be funded by the World Bank. According to an eyewitness report from late 2001, virtually every building lining the long main street in Xiangride town in Tulan (Chinese: Dulan) county, including relatively new, multi-storey structures, is prominently marked with the Chinese character 'chai' indicating impending demolition. The scale of the proposed demolitions indicates that the authorities are intending to create an entirely new townscape to serve as an economic and administrative centre for an enlarged population in the county. China appears to have accelerated the pace of the resettlement project in Tulan since it withdrew its request for World Bank funding in July 2000.

1. For more information on demographic changes in Qinghai see TIN Special Report by Susette Cooke, "The politics of population transfer" <http://www.tibetinfo.net/news-updates/nj261099.htm>

In July 2000 China rejected World Bank conditions and withdrew its request for a \$40 million loan for the controversial project, which involves the resettlement of nearly 58,000 poor farmers, less than 10% of whom are Tibetan or Mongol, from eastern Qinghai into a traditionally Tibetan and Mongolian area of Qinghai province incorporating Xiangride town. Beijing then announced it would carry out the project "in its own way", according to China's World Bank Executive Director Zhu Xian (7 July 2000). The provincial vice-governor Bai Ma told western journalists who visited Qinghai on a press trip in summer 2001 that the first batch of 20,000 people would be resettled in the area within three years.

According to a report in the Qinghai Daily on 10 August, China aims to have the "main part" of the project completed by the end of 2002 and the main "construction tasks" finished within two years. The original projected schedule by the World Bank was for the completion of a reservoir and roads by 2003, electric grid by 2004, irrigation scheme by 2005 and resettlement by 2006 (World Bank Project Appraisal, 1 June 1999). An accelerated project implementation schedule could mean that the authorities will have to make certain compromises in order to save time and money. One key area of concern for the World Bank Inspection Panel that investigated the project in 1999 – 2000 was potential damage to the environment. In its report of 28 April 2000, the Inspection Panel concluded: *"Given the scale of absolute habitat conversion in the Project area, involving 19,000 hectares of land that will be irrigated, and construction developments such as the dam, canals, townships, villages and roads – all adding up to an estimated 21,444 hectares – it cannot be asserted with confidence that possible critical natural habitats will not be lost."*

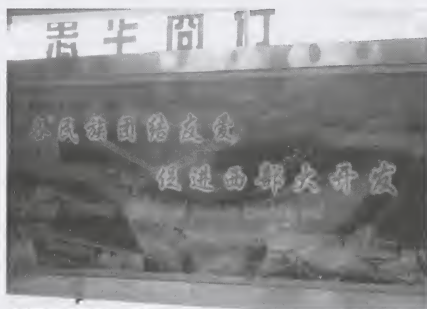
The demolition of the main area of the town of Xiangride is likely to be an important part of the ambitious and accelerated development plans in Tulan county. The provincial government aims to develop further an agricultural base and an infrastructure in the area, enabling it to exploit the rich mineral resources of Qinghai, which

include petroleum, natural gas, asbestos, salt, potash, lead and zinc. The major Chinese resource extraction zone in the Qaidam (Tib: Tsaidam) Basin further west, where oil and gas, salt and potash and other minerals are removed and processed for use in China's energy, plastics, petrochemicals and fertiliser industries needs supplies of fresh food, grains and other basic necessities to sustain an immigrant workforce in an arid area. The Xiangride oasis area, which was first cultivated by Mongols and Tibetans due to its favourable natural conditions, is one of the closest centres of grain production to this area. The resettlement project that was formerly to be funded by the World Bank accords closely with Chinese policies that aim to re-characterise regional habitation and development patterns. Funding of the resettlement project by the World Bank would have set a precedent, providing support of Chinese demographic restructuring and development aims by an international institution.

The implementation of the resettlement project will have a substantial impact on the population and ethnic mix of Xiangride and its surrounding area. In his statement to Western journalists last year, the Qinghai provincial vice-governor Bai Ma provided no specific information on the ethnic "mix" of the people to be resettled in Tulan county, the "move-in" area, although he said that it contained "a number" of "minority peoples". The World Bank 'Summary Paper' issued in summer 1999 showed that about 52% of the total of poor farmers due to be resettled were from three 'minority groups', the Hui (Chinese Muslim), Tu and Salar. Han Chinese would account for 42% and Tibetans about 6%; there were no Mongols in the proposed move-in group.

The same World Bank paper reported that the existing population in Tulan County (52,669) was about 53% Chinese (Han), 23% Tibetan, 14% Mongol, 7% Hui, 1.5% Salar and 1.0% Tu. These levels, presumably reported to the World Bank by their Chinese counterparts, and which do not include the considerable number of mostly Chinese prisoners in labour camps (laogai), contrast unexpectedly with official 1990 census data. Nearly a decade before the Bank issued its Summary Paper, Tulan's official population was higher (56,090), with more Chinese (60%) and less Tibetan (19%). The change is mostly accounted for by a drop of nearly 17% in the county's reported Han population (from about 33,636 in 1990 to 27,977 in the Bank's paper). That Tulan's overall population as well as Chinese population were both decreasing during the decade while the Tibetan population increased is inconsistent with the economic and developmental boom which dominated the 1990s, and may signify the tendency of statistics to be shaped by factors other than full or accurate disclosure of data.

The proposed in-migration of nearly 58,000 farmers, more than 90% of whom were to be non-indigenous under the World Bank plan, will more than double the county's



Hoarding in Central Tibet: "Fraternal unity of all nationalities. Promote the great development of the West."

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population. If the ethnic breakdown of the immigrants remains the same as the original World Bank plan, the percentage of Tibetans will be reduced to 9.2% and Mongols to 5.9% as the Tulan population rises to more than 110,000. The Tibetan and Mongolian population of the area will probably be diluted further by the increased

influx of new settlers that is likely to result from the development of Xiangride and other towns in the area. The Chinese authorities have emphasised that the Tulan county resettlement project proposed by the World Bank is a suitable model for future development in the province.

DOCUMENT

The following text presents extracts of a report by the official Chinese news agency Xinhua on a speech given by President Jiang Zemin on a western region development forum held in Chongqing on 24 May 2002. In this speech, Jiang Zemin calls for a faster development of the poor region in the West of the PRC. The speech identifies in particular better infrastructure, economic restructuring, and education as the key elements of the western development drive policies. He also stresses the intimate link between development, reforms and 'stability'.

Chinese president addresses western region development forum

Chongqing, 24 May: Jiang Zemin, general secretary of the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee, president of the state, and chairman of the Central Military Commission, chaired a forum held here yesterday afternoon and this morning to discuss the development of western China. He stressed: In the face of the profound changes in the world and the situation where we have to adapt to the development of our socialist market economy and where we have become a World Trade Organisation member, we must, while developing western China, come up with innovative ideas, innovative methods, and innovative mechanisms; and we must deepen reform, open up wider to the outside world, and blaze a new trail for the development of western China.

Jiang Zemin noted: Accelerating development is the fundamental way to solve all the problems in western China. Western China must seize and properly use the current historical opportunities created by its development, firmly adhere to the main theme of development, and persevere in dealing with all the problems standing in its way with foresight, ideas and methods oriented towards development. Development requires innovative ideas. We must push forward the two fundamental changes – changing the economic system and the ways to achieve economic growth – work hard to increase the efficiency in using the natural and financial resources in western China and the efficiency of economic growth, correctly handle the relationship between economic development on the one hand and conserving resources, protecting the environment, achieving social progress, and full development of human resources on the other; and work hard to ensure sustainable social and economic development.

(...) Jiang Zemin gave an important speech. He pointed out: The strategy for developing western China is an important strategic policy decision that the central authorities drew up after fully assessing the situation and analysing the situations at home and abroad. It is a strategic policy decision made to expedite China's modernisation process. In the past two years or so, all local authorities and departments, and especially the vast number of cadres and people in western China, have achieved remarkable successes in implementing the strategy for developing western China in



Two different views of today's Lhasa.



"Construct the Qinghai-Tibet railway with high quality and great efficiency. Civilised construction is required to accomplish the glorious achievement of the century as a monument to the reputation of Chengdu Railway Bureau."

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(...)

Jiang Zemin stressed: To expedite the development of productivity in western China, we must rationally adjust the relations between the different production sectors, deepen reform, and introduce new institutions there. We must always regard pushing forward reform as the power for driving development so that we can continue to liberate and develop western China's productivity. Party committees and governments at all levels in western China must include the improvement of their investment environment in their lists of important things to do, continue to change their administrative functions, be good at using economic and legal measures to manage economic affairs, tighten and improve macroeconomic regulation and control, and give full scope to the market's role in distributing resources. We must firmly protect the legitimate rights and interests of the producers, business operators and investors, and build a social environment in which operators can compete fairly, honestly and creditably. In accordance with the requirements set for modern enterprises, we must speed up restructuring, reorganising and transforming the state-owned enterprises so that we can improve their capacity for scientific-technological development, their capacity for competing in the market, and their capacity for overcoming risks. At the same time, we must also actively develop non-public economies. We must continue to open wider to the outside world, make better use of the markets and resources at home and abroad, "bring in" [Chinese: *zou chu qu*] while "stepping outside" [*jin jin lai* - i.e. attract overseas investment], and develop open economic undertakings in all sectors.

Jiang Zemin stressed: We must always regard stability as the important prerequisite for promoting reform and speeding up growth, and make efforts to ensure long-term stability during the course of deepening reform and sustaining growth. We must uphold the party's mass line, serve the people wholeheartedly, maintain our flesh-and-blood ties with the people, make ensuring the masses' interests as the important link of correctly handling the relationships between reform, development and stability; and improve the masses' living conditions and develop western China at the same time. We must do everything possible to increase the peasants' incomes and speed up the work of solving the basic food and clothing problems of the masses living in poverty-stricken areas, minority areas, and remote areas. We must tighten our efforts in implementing the measures for ensuring the production needs, living needs, and social security of the people in the old industrial bases and workers of SOEs in western China. We must strive to create more jobs during the course of developing western China. We must pool the masses' strength and wisdom and give fuller scope to the enthusiasm of people in all quarters.



Construction site on the Golmud-Lhasa railway.

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Speaking on those projects that must be accomplished while expediting the development of western China, Jiang Zemin said: The development of western China is a sizable system engineering project and a formidable historical mission. We must have the mental readiness to wage hard struggles for a long time and the courage of pressing

forward regardless of the hardship ahead. We must have the sense of urgency of seizing every minute and the methods of blazing new trails and breaking new ground. We must have clearly-defined objectives and the spirit of working hard to reach these objectives. Surrounding the priorities set by the central authorities and taking into consideration the different features of the different places, we should pool our resources to accomplish something important for the development of western China and something practical for improving the people's living conditions so that we can build a strong foundation for the development of western China. First of all, we must underscore priority developmental projects and build a stronger infrastructure in western China. Second, we must speed up the process of improving the ecosystem and consolidate and strengthen the groundwork for agriculture. Third, we must tighten economic restructuring and expedite the development in key areas. Fourth, we must give priority to promoting education in science and technology, and give greater support for building a legal system and for implementing policies.

Jiang Zemin stressed: To push forward the development of western China, we must build a stronger legal system there. Western China has its own distinctive economic, social, cultural, ethnic, religious, educational, and ecological situations, which we must take into account, and speed up building a legal system for the development of western China by following some countries' useful experiences in developing the less developed areas through adopting legal measures so that we can ensure the stability and continuity of the central authorities' guiding thought, principles, objectives, policies and measures for the development of western China; and so that, after we have institutionalised all projects, there will be a legal system to safeguard the strategy for developing western China and to guide, protect, and bring into play the masses' enthusiasm.

Speaking on speeding up the development of areas where people of ethnic minorities live in compact communities, Jiang Zemin said: Western China is where Chinese minorities live in compact communities. While developing western China, we must pay attention to speeding up minority areas' economic and social development, to strengthening national solidarity, and to safeguarding social stability. The central authorities will continue to increase investment and expenditure in building minority areas' public facilities and will continue to organise other regions with resources to provide counterpart support for minority areas. All parts of the country should act according to the instructions made at the Fourth Central Forum on Tibetan Affairs and continue to give Tibet preferential treatment so as to speed up Tibet's development and increase Tibet's capacity for self-development, now and in the future.

(...)

Jiang Zemin stressed: Improving the style of our work is a pressing task to make the development of western China more efficient. Leading cadres must immerse themselves among the masses and go deep into the realities of life to investigate and study the important issues that have a close bearing on the development of western China. By conducting investigations and studies, they should discover new situations and come up with new ideas for solving the new problems. Government organisations should also change their way of work, heighten their sense of service, and improve their operating efficiency. Western China's natural and social conditions are relatively poor, thus it is particularly necessary for the leading cadres there to foster the spirit of being particularly able to endure hardship and to fight. They must carry forward the spirit of defying hardship, waging arduous struggle, and devoting themselves wholeheartedly to their duties. They should consciously dedicate themselves as fully as they can to the local development. The vast number of cadres and people in western China should press forward in unity, make constant efforts to increase western China's self-development capacity, and gradually come up with the mechanisms that facilitate self-development.

In his speech, Jiang Zemin specially underscored the importance of developing western China's human resources. He said: Useful personnel are essential for the development of western China. Ever since the adoption of the strategy for developing western China, the central authorities have drawn up a string of policies and measures for developing western China's human resources. Western China itself has also accomplished a great deal of work useful for developing its human resources. We must continue to mobilise the enthusiasm and creativity of those who are already working in western China so as to give full scope to the role they are playing. We must build the mechanisms – mechanisms compatible with western China's economic and social situation and with the development of human resources in western China with which western China can make independent decisions about hiring from the outside the personnel it needs; improve the policies governing personnel use; draw up rules for managing personnel; tighten the formulation of regulations governing personnel use; promote a large number of outstanding personnel – including party and government leaders, scientists and technicians and managerial experts – and attract and encourage all types of outstanding personnel in the country to break new ground in western China. We should make greater efforts to promote exchange among leading cadres to increase their vitality. We should create effective mechanisms governing investment in the development of human resources, give priority to investing in the development of human resources,

and ensure the availability of capital for developing human resources. We should improve the market of human resources, use the market and policies to guide the rational flow of useful personnel, and make sure that personnel can act independently in choosing their jobs so as to optimise the use of our human resources. We must continue to strengthen personnel training and work hard to improve the proficiency of the useful personnel in western China.

Jiang Zemin pointed out: The next five to 10 years will be a period crucial for the development of western China. All party members and people across the country must continue to act on the central authorities' general and specific policies and plans for the development of western China, and all regions and departments must tighten their coordination in implementing the 10th Five-Year Plan and the plan for developing western China, and make sure to accomplish all priority missions and objectives set for the different stages. The central authorities have made it clear that the state will give priority to implementing the policies and measures for the development of western China, and all regions and departments must earnestly examine the implementation of these policies and measures. Relevant central departments must adapt themselves to the new requirements created by China's WTO entry, and tighten their efforts in studying policies and measures for supporting western China's reform and opening-up, and earnestly support the implementation of the strategy for the development of western China.

In conclusion, Jiang Zemin said: As long as the party and the people of all ethnic groups in the country work with one heart and one mind and fight hard for several generations, we certainly will achieve the grand objective of developing western China and we certainly will build an economically prosperous, socially progressive new western China with beautiful landscapes where people of all nationalities will work in unity and enjoy happiness.

Source: Xinhua news agency domestic service, Beijing.

Translation: BBC Monitoring

Shortened version: TIN



New quarters in the east of Lhasa.

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TIN NEWS STORY

TIN NEWS UPDATE, 16 DECEMBER 2002 (EDITED)

Médecins Sans Frontières to leave Tibet

The independent aid organisation Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF, or Doctors without Borders) has made the controversial decision to pull out of Tibet at the end of 2002 after 14 years of working with Tibetans on humanitarian and medical assistance projects. A respected research and treatment project on Kashin-Beck (Big Bone) Disease and other MSF medical programmes will continue in Tibet under the auspices of the European branch of the newly created charity Terma. The MSF water sanitation project will be continued by another charity, the Save the Children Fund. A spokesperson for MSF, which won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1999, said: *"The MSF flag will no longer be flying in Lhasa in January."*

Christopher Stokes, Director of Operations at MSF in Brussels said: *"We're closing our operation in Tibet for operational and human resources reasons but we want to keep the door open to possibly go back. Tibet is a hard environment to work in an MSF-style way. We're aiming to shift our focus to treatment for people with HIV/AIDS in China."* Some of the more than 50 MSF staff based in Tibet, mostly Tibetans – including technicians who work on the water sanitation project as well as medical staff – are likely to find work with other non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in the region. The Tibetan staff for the Kashin-Beck Disease project are being kept on by the charity Terma. The decision to pull out of Tibet was said to have been made following a reshuffle of MSF operational strategy in the area, linked to difficulties with continuity of staff and the transfer of management of MSF's Tibet projects from Lhasa to Beijing. MSF staff were reportedly been told by management that the reason for the decision was that MSF should be engaged with emergency relief not long-term aid and development. However the decision remains controversial within MSF.

MSF has developed a reputation for activism as well as medical assistance projects since it was founded by a group of French doctors in 1971. Relations between the authorities in Tibet and MSF have frequently been tense, partially due to the charity's stated mandate of *"undertaking advocacy positions when dealing with specific abuses of endangered populations"*. In June 1997, two senior members of the MSF team had their permits briefly withdrawn – Chinese officials are said to have commented that the two experts had been in Tibet for too long. The two were later granted partial access to the region after senior MSF officials flew to Lhasa to discuss the issue. In the past few years, the authorities in Tibet

reduced the geographical scope of MSF's operations and there have been difficulties for the charity in reaching agreement on the implementation of projects.

The difficulties with the authorities experienced by MSF over the years reportedly contributed to the final decision of the charity to leave Tibet. A member of MSF staff who has worked in Tibet said that the implementation of Beijing directives on payment for health care, known as the 'co-operative medical system' (CMS) in rural areas, had led to increased pressure on MSF, particularly from the mid-1990s onwards. He said: *"The authorities in some cases attempted to use us to implement these policies and further constraints were imposed on our work."* At least once, MSF was told that permission to implement projects was conditional on their agreement to implement the CMS system, which the authorities stated was their first priority. MSF had argued for more basic systems to be put in place such as management of essential drugs. The same member of staff also said that policy directives from Beijing were not adapted to the situation in Tibetan areas, and that the lack of a *"community approach"* had caused difficulties in communication about health care concerns. Incidents of corruption by the local authorities have also been a concern for MSF – requests were made by local officials during the charity's period of operation in Tibet for money to buy vehicles such as Land Cruisers rather than for the provision of health care.

The authorities in Tibet maintain a strict control over the activities of all foreign NGOs and aid projects in Tibetan areas. Tibet has one of the smallest concentrations of NGOs in the world, prompting concerns that the withdrawal of MSF will have an impact on Tibetans who have benefited from their projects.

TIN NEWS STORY

TIN NEWS UPDATE, 15 JANUARY 2002 (EDITED) 6 FEBRUARY 2003

Despite economic boom, rural standards of living in the Tibet Autonomous Region still below 1992 levels

Recent reports from the official statistical bureau in China estimate that the economy of the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) has outperformed all of the other western provinces of China in 2002. Yet these short-term statistical reports actually mask the reality of a particularly punitive decade on the economic livelihood of Tibetans. In 1992, Deng Xiaoping announced that to get rich was "*glorious*". Coastal China re-embarked on a path of exhilarating growth. But in the rural areas of the TAR, where about 85 percent of the Tibetans in the province live, the cost of living increased faster than incomes. Despite exceedingly rapid national and provincial economic growth, the present purchasing power of rural incomes in the TAR is still less than it was in the early 1990s. Chinese government sources then estimated that more than one in five rural Tibetans were living in absolute poverty.² In this context, claims by the authorities of "*marked progress*" in the standard of living and poverty reduction are misleading.

The recent reports issued by the official Chinese news agency Xinhua give an early glimpse into the results of the 2002 statistical surveys in the TAR. According to these reports, the 'Regional Statistical Bureau' estimates that the Gross Domestic Product³ of the TAR increased by 12.4 percent in 2002. They also note that the average annual rural household income⁴ calculated per individual rose 8.6 percent in that year to 1,525 Yuan (about £ 112 or US \$ / EUR 185), up from 1,404 Yuan (about £ 103 or US \$ / EUR 170) a year earlier.

Even taken at face value these growth estimates merely indicate a recovery from severe economic setbacks during the 1990s. While the overall economy of the TAR has been growing quickly, the dynamic parts of this economy are effectively concentrated in the urban areas or in the state-sector in which only a small minority of Tibetan households are involved. The growth rate of rural household incomes however, which includes most Tibetans, has not seen any real gain over the last decade. The standard of living of the average Tibetan cannot be represented by literal growth figures, but by actual purchasing power. Calculated in these terms, the official statistics reported by the Chinese government describe a dismal situation. In 2002 real rural incomes in the TAR were considerably less than in 1992.

The consumer price index of the rural areas, available from the official 'Tibet Bureau of Statistics', shows that the cost of living in rural TAR rose by 97 percent between 1992 and 2001. However, rural incomes rose by only 69 percent over the same period. Thus the actual purchasing power of rural incomes was 14 percent lower in 2001 than it was in 1992. Even assuming zero inflation in 2002, the rural income estimates for 2002 reported above would still be almost seven percent short of their 1992 level in terms of purchasing power. If the rural incomes continue to grow at a similar rate, the average standard of living of farmers and

nomads will barely reach its 1992 level in the year 2003. The TAR was the only province in China to have experienced such a fall during the last decade of China's exceptional growth.

The economic setbacks in the 1990s took place at two specific times. In 1994, the real value of rural incomes in the TAR fell by almost 16 percent. In 1997 it again fell by over 16 percent. The fall in 1994 was in part due to inflation of over 30 percent in the rural areas. The sharp fall in 1997 was probably related to severe weather conditions at the end of the year. These figures effectively map out the economic stagnation and depression faced by the majority of the Tibetans in the TAR during the mid-1990s. They also



The rural side of Tibet.

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² 'Absolute poverty' implies that a person does not have sufficient income to be able to consume around 2100 calories a day, which is considered the basic human minimum for survival.

³ Gross Domestic Product: Sum of all of the economic activity in the province, not including the foreign trade balance.

⁴ The specific term is 'per capita net income of rural households'. 'Per capita' implies that the income of a household is divided by the number of people living in the household. 'Net income' implies that costs have been deducted from the gross revenue of the household. This is important, particularly in the TAR, as most rural income is derived from household production and not from wages.

demonstrate the increasing susceptibility of the rural economy in the TAR to both economic and environmental shocks.

Given the dismal performance of the TAR rural areas, it is difficult to see how poverty rates could have been significantly reduced. In various reports, the Chinese authorities claim to have reduced the numbers living in absolute poverty in the TAR from 480,000 in the early 1990s to 70,000 in 2002. Given the actual value of rural incomes over this period, it appears that the calculation of the number of people living in poverty does not account for increases in the cost of living. Thus, the nomads and farmers who were once declared as living in absolute poverty appear to be statistically 'richer' because their incomes have increased. However they are likely to be as poor, if not more so than before, given that the basic costs of food and necessities have also risen, not to mention the rapidly increasing fees for education and health services.

Rather than outperforming other western provinces of the PRC, the income figures underpin a sharp fall in rural living standards in the TAR relative to the rest of China during the last decade. Until 1992, the official figures on rural household incomes in the TAR were equal to the national average and were higher than those of all the other western provinces. Between 1993 and 1997 they swiftly fell to the lowest in the country, even lower than those of Guizhou, which is usually considered to be the poorest province of China. They maintained this unenviable position up until 2001. The recent figures for 2002 would place the TAR only in competition with Guizhou and Shaanxi for the last place. All of the other western provinces had already reported rural incomes greater than 1,500 Yuan in 2001. Therefore, although Tibetan rural incomes were allegedly growing fast, they were also growing from the lowest level in the region.



Lhasa by night, the modern side of Tibet.

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TESTIMONY

Collection of caterpillar fungus

The collection and sale of caterpillar fungus has a long history in Tibetan areas. In Chinese medicine, doctors administer it to patients suffering from tuberculosis and other lung or kidney illnesses. However, in many parts of Tibet collecting caterpillar fungus has become a welcome additional source of income for Tibetans as well as Chinese and Hui Muslim migrants. A Tibetan speaks about conflicts arising between Tibetans from different areas over their collection, which he says previously did not take place. A lengthy article in the China Daily (11 October 2000) indicates that environmental damage caused by over-collection has led local governments to introducing limits on collection. In addition, on 9 January 2002, the Tibetinfo.com web site reported that Nagchu prefecture's Science and Technology Commission, in co-operation with Chongqing Traditional Chinese Medicine Research Institute, had succeeded in "breeding" caterpillar fungus, making its production *"fast and inexpensive"*. If so, this development may in time threaten caterpillar fungus collection as a means of supplementing income.

A 23-year old teacher from Xunhua Shen, Dobi Shang, who comes from a farming family, talks about the need for farmers to find work to supplement their income, particularly during years where the crop yield is low. He mentions construction work and also the collection of caterpillar fungus (yartsa gunbu; lit: summer grass, winter worm).



Caterpillar fungus (yartsa gunbu).

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"We have farms with irrigated fields as well as fields which are not irrigated. If there is no rain then the fields that are not irrigated do not grow well. There have been droughts in our area for many years and hence crops did not grow well. And after the tax is paid it is not enough. If there is a continuous drought for many years then we have to buy food grain. There are families who face a shortage of food grain. The man of the household goes out and does side jobs, and whatever little money he gets is used to buy food grain. The main side jobs are hard labour in building monasteries and houses. These days, fences are being built in nomad areas and stone walls are built around animal enclosures. Also they go and pick caterpillar fungus. They get only about one thousand yuan if they work for about three months. Some get more than one thousand yuan, but on average they get only about one thousand yuan."

A 26-year-old nomad from Yushu prefecture in Qinghai explained that nomads, like farmers, also have to find what he refers to as 'side work' to supplement income from animal husbandry – a need which, he says, has become greater since the grasslands were distributed. He explains the system in place for the collection of caterpillar fungus, which seems to be under the control of the local authorities in his area.

"It has been about four years since they distributed the land. They distributed the land by rukhag [group]. Chinese government officials from the county came and distributed the land. [Before the land distribution] we had more than 115 animals. There are many like us whose animals died and who left for other places. [In order to make a living] I did work like buying and selling vehicles. I couldn't buy new vehicles, I bought old vehicles and sold them. Previously the nomads sustained their lives by selling their animals' meat and butter. Now they do not have many animals. They sustain their lives by selling caterpillar fungus."

Caterpillar fungus doesn't grow everywhere. The Chinese protect these places where the caterpillar fungus grows. Each person that goes to pluck the fungus has to pay a fee. They give a receipt for it, and in that receipt it is written that the person is allowed to pluck caterpillar fungus in a particular place and it is also written that he is not allowed to pluck the fungus in any other place. In the third and the fourth Tibetan month the Chinese officials guard all the bridges and the main roads in all the places where the caterpillar fungus grows, and you have to buy passes. They stop all the people and the vehicles that pass through these places. It seems many offices are working together. There must be policemen, check-posts, a tax office and many other offices. There are many people who wear different uniforms."

I went to Bachan. At Bachan also each person has to give a fee. I hired 30 people from Ngari, Tsang [Shigatse and the region surrounding it], and I decided to give them 30 yuan each per day. Then I decided to give them meals and I decided to pay their journey fares. Those people from Tsang [Tsangpa] had never been to pick caterpillar fungus. Other people got good fungus and the Tsangpa people that I hired weren't getting good fungus. I suffered severe losses. There were many people that came to pick the fungus. Thousands of tents were put up. They come from Chamdo, Markham, Dragyab, Dege, Gonjo and they also come from Lhasa. They come from everywhere. There are many thousands of Chinese that were working in the construction of roads in Tengenchen county. All these Chinese come to pluck caterpillar fungus without the pass. Many Chinese come to pluck the fungus."

The following account was given by a Tibetan from Lithang who has been going to collect caterpillar fungus for the past 20 years. He talks about the fights that have broken out between the fungus collectors and the nomads who have been assigned pastureland in the area where the fungus is gathered; stating that ten people have died has a result. In his opinion the problem is caused by land distribution; the nomads now have a sense of ownership over the pastureland that has been assigned to them and as a result fight with anyone coming on to the land to gather fungus.

"I gathered caterpillar fungus and I constructed buildings for the extraction of gold. Originally we are farmers. We have farmland, but we don't have land that provides us with enough to survive. In order to collect caterpillar fungus we have to travel four to five hours by tractor. We have collected caterpillar fungus since I was small, for about 20 years. I go with my family members and a neighbour.

"We go for caterpillar fungus to a place called Buthog [dBU thog]. The nomads of Buthog say that they won't let us gather caterpillar fungus if we don't have a pass. But we don't get a pass. Tibetans fight with Tibetans and the reason why these fights occur is because the Chinese divided the pastures and so people [now] say, "this is my land, that is your land". Since the distribution of land, when we go to collect caterpillar fungus at their place, they fight with us. When they come to our county town to buy things, we fight with them.

"When we collect caterpillar fungus, we never wander off far away from our partners. We are in a group in a tent and we always keep in sight of each other because if we wander off we might be beaten, which we could never allow to happen while others are near. Although the Chinese were asked to come with a solution to solve this conflict, they haven't come up with a solution. So far ten people have been killed due to this conflict. People from our area died, but also people from the Buthog area. People on both sides lost their lives and they are all Tibetan.

"We didn't get that much [caterpillar fungus] in a day because we tended to relax on the grass after we found a few. You have to look carefully for the caterpillar fungus stems. You don't need strength – this work is the same for a child of six as it is for a man of 30; strength is not involved. Earlier I used to find 30 or 40 pieces of caterpillar fungus per day. We used to stay for a month, and if there were good rains some people found 100 pieces of caterpillar fungus per day. This is not the type of figure you find every day, but if there was snowfall we couldn't go out to search, and then after a few days, when the snow melted, you could find such numbers.

"Elderly people say that they used to find thousands of pieces in a day. The minimum people would find was four or five hundred in a day, they say. They say that we don't find caterpillar fungus in such numbers. But I think that in the old days there were not many people who collected them. Also the lands had not been distributed, so you could go wherever you wanted. They say that when you picked one piece of caterpillar fungus you could see the next. These days there are three or four hundred tents on a hill where people are looking for caterpillar fungus. The hills where there is caterpillar fungus are now full of people; you don't find an empty hillside.

"You can't count the number of people who pick the fungus, it is very busy at the site, year by year the numbers of people are increasing. There are more than three hundred tents. If you compare the sites where gold is found, where medicinal plants are collected and where caterpillar fungus is collected, then most people go to the place where caterpillar fungus is collected. They come from everywhere, from the villages, nomads, and farmers.

"You get about fifteen hundred yuan in a month, we sell the fungus in the county town, there are many buyers in the county town. In the end the fungus is all carried to Chinese areas. In order to sell the fungus to the Chinese we need a permit. It takes a lot of trouble to get such a permit and we only sell small quantities [of fungus]. So we sell it to the Tibetan businessmen who sell it to the Chinese. We don't have to do this in secret. There is no one who restricts this, if they ask you where you go you can without problem say that you are going to sell caterpillar fungus.

"The country is filled with the Chinese and the Muslims that have come to pick caterpillar fungus and to dig gold. They come to Chengdu and from Chengdu they come up to Lithang and other places. They come in big groups and they do not bring along any passes. They do not care much about what clothes to put on and about what food to eat. They move around picking caterpillar fungus. If they are told not to pluck the fungus here they will move to another place and so on. When they move around to pluck the fungus they very easily commute. They are unlike the Tibetans who have heaps of clothes to wear and plenty of food to carry along. If they stay in tents, then it is easy for the nomads to find them. The Chinese do not have tents though, they only put up some plastic for the night. In the morning they run around to pluck caterpillar fungus. As they do not pitch tents, it is not possible to go after every individual to check for the pass, since there are many people that come to pick caterpillar fungus."



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DOCUMENT

The following article, which was published in the August issue of the journal 'Ethno-National Studies', points to the development of frontier trade as an important component of China's opening up policy in that it is an efficient way of developing the economy in 'minority nationality' areas. The article is remarkable since it anticipates the re-opening of the Dromo area (Chin. Yadong) and adjacent Nathu-la pass at the southern border of the TAR for border trade which was agreed between India and the PRC during Indian prime minister Vajpayee's visit to China in June 2003. The original text has been shortened and partially summarised for translation.

Frontier trade and economic developments in frontier nationality areas

by Du fa chun

The border of our country on the mainland is as long as 22,000 kilometres, and borders 15 different countries. Among the 143 frontier counties in the mainland, there are 112 regional national autonomies, representing 78% of the counties, and the population is around 21 million. People living on the frontiers have established good relations with their neighbours through their long histories of production and by helping to meet each others needs through frontier trade. (...) Since the establishment of the People's Republic of China, due to the international situation and the internal political and economic system, frontier trade was carried out only on a small scale.

At the beginning of the 1980s, along with the deepening of our country's reform and opening up, and the changes in the international situation, the traditional frontier trade in Xinjiang, Yunnan and Inner Mongolia started to recover and began to increase day by day so that it had a positive impact on the development of their local economy. (...) In 1984 the State Council approved an article distributed by the Foreign Trade Ministry entitled 'Temporary Management Measures for a Small Amount of Frontier Trade'. This clearly defined the principle of 'five self', i.e. supplying goods by oneself, finding the way of selling goods by oneself, discussing business by oneself, maintaining one's equilibrium by oneself, and assuming responsibility for one's profits or losses by oneself. Since then, frontier trade began to prosper and by the end of the 1980s the situation became 'no longer just a frontier trade and no longer a small amount'.

The Central Work Conference on Nationality Affairs was convened in January 1992, and our country's strategy of opening up frontiers was formally pursued. In the spring of 1992, the State Council opened up 13 more frontier cities and townships. At the same time, the state practised a favourable policy, similar to when it opened up coastal cities, to landlocked provincial capitals like Kunming, Guiyang, Yinchuan, Nanning, Urumchi, and Huhehot, etc.

Initially, the frontier trade was a spontaneous and small-scale folk trade practised at a low level but now it has a large structure with dynamic and complex characteristics, and it is no longer small-scale frontier trade but has developed into large-scale international trade and cooperation of economies and techniques. (...) The folk trade has developed into a mixed trade of state-owned, collective or individuals.

The implementation of the great strategy of the development of the eastern part of our country has offered important historic opportunities for frontier trade. In the near future, the state will speed up infrastructure construction in the west (...) which will encourage more people from outside and inside our country to invest in minority nationality areas, and this will benefit and develop frontier trade.

The strategy of the big development of the west will inevitably increase the scale of opening up along the borders, will increase import and export channels and will provide trading opportunities for frontier ethnic areas. At present, there are 42 state standard trading ports and 120 local standard trading ports in ethnic areas, but there is no equilibrium of distribution. For example, Tibet has three trading ports, Zhangmu, Phulan and Jilong (Tib: Zham, Purang and Kyirong) (...) but due to various reasons, trading port like Yadong, (Tib: Dromo) which has a wide range of goods for trading, is still closed (...). Our country will soon join the WTO, and from the point of entirety, it is beneficial to China (...). We must know that joining the WTO will have a positive impact on frontier trade (...) China's tariff will be reduced, and the tariff rate on imports and exports in frontier trade will be cut (...) the licence restrictions on the number of imported and exported frontier trading goods will be more relaxed, etc.

OFFICIAL NEWS COVERAGE AND OTHER SOURCES**29 December 2001**

China's Defence Minister Chi Haotian has called on military units in the western provinces (including Yunnan and Sichuan) to help develop the region. He stressed that national defence construction should be carried out along with economic development, including the manufacture of products for both peacetime and wartime. Chi Haotian emphasised the importance of safeguarding frontier defence, maintaining social stability, and making full preparations for a possible military struggle.

Xinhua news agency domestic service, Beijing

1 January 2002

600 million yuan (73 million U.S. dollars) will soon be spent on improving the existing Sichuan-Tibet highway road. The re-building of the road will concentrate on a 75-kilometre section near the Sichuan-Tibet boundary.

Xinhuanet, Lhasa

2 January 2002

Tibetan farmers and herds people have got more net income this year, 5.9 percent more than last year. The increased net income has been attributed to this year's good harvest, the 14th in a row.

Xinhuanet, Lhasa

2 January 2002

China is building a "Digital Tibet" Internet network to break the monopoly of the dissemination of Tibet information by foreign countries that present a "distorted" and "separatist" perspective. Increasing numbers of web sites about Tibet have emerged in China in recent years and central and local government will invest significantly in information facilities in the region. Already, optical fibre cables have been laid from Lhasa to Xigaze, Nyingchi, Qamdo and other areas. All the towns of the region will be connected by telephone before 2005.

Xinhua news agency

4 January 2002

Following the completion of a hydropower station on the mainstream of the Yellow River (Huang He), Madoi county in Golog Tibetan Prefecture has become the last county in Qinghai Province to be connected to the electric grid.

Xinhua news agency

8 January 2002

Chinese geologists have discovered ample mineral resources along the Qinghai-Tibet Railway, the largest of its kind in the world. According to a preliminary estimate, copper belts found near the railway construction site could amount to over one million tons. Meanwhile, geologists in Qinghai found 13 high-grade cobalt mining belts at the eastern part of Kunlun Mountains, which have an estimated reserve of 20,000 tons (the world's total cobalt reserve is around two million tons). Additionally, at the southern edge of Qaidam Basin, 200 deposits including three gold deposits and two

cobalt deposits were recently discovered.

Xinhua news agency

8 January 2002

Chinese Vice-Premier Li Lanqing has called for improved radio and TV coverage in the country's remote western regions in order to promote economic development, social stability and ethnic harmony in the border regions. He also urged those involved in radio and TV to improve the quality of their programmes, with stress on higher moral, artistic and entertainment values.

Xinhua news agency

9 January 2002

According to the China United Telecommunications Corp (China Unicom), the second largest telecommunications provider in China, a CDMA (Code Division Multiple Access) network has come into operation in the Tibet Autonomous Region. The China Unicom Tibet branch, established in May 2001, has completed the first phase construction of the CDMA Tibetan network, and will provide service to 20,000 users in Lhasa, Dagze County, Dölungdeqen County, Quxu County, Gonggar Airport and areas along highways connecting Lhasa with the region's major counties.

Xinhua news agency

9 January 2002

Sources with the China National Tourism Administration have announced that China will set standards for tourist guide behaviour to bring more order to the industry. Tourist guides will be graded according to their performances, and will be supervised on a national as well as local level.

People's Daily

20 January 2002

Construction has begun on a large hydro-electric power station on the Lancang River in Yunnan Province, where a 292 metre high dam is to be built. The Lancang River originates on the Qinghai-Tibet plateau and, known as the Mekong River, runs through Myanmar, Laos, Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam before it empties into the South China Sea. Water conservancy experts say the project, due to be completed by 2012, will help flood control and soil erosion prevention efforts downstream as well as providing electricity to the coastal province of Guangdong, south China.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

22 January 2002

Sichuan Province is planning to rebuild 1,500 kilometres of roads leading to and from tourist resorts in ethnic-minority regions, as part of a drive to improve the province's infrastructure for tourism, at a cost of 560m dollars. Overseas investors include those from the United States, France and Japan. There are also plans to upgrade communications and energy facilities within and around resorts, and to construct airports in leading scenic sights. Sichuan plans to promote tourism internationally, especially targeting markets in Europe and the United States.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

23 January 2002

China is moving 17,000 mostly Chinese and Muslim settlers to Qinghai province, a traditionally Tibetan region, reviving a plan abandoned by the World Bank after protests by critics of China's Tibetan policies. The World Bank got involved in the Dulan project in the late 1990s, and agreed to lend China \$40 million to cover half the cost. Tibetan activists condemned the plan, contending it would dilute Qinghai's Tibetan character and ravage the local environment by increasing demands for water and farmland. While the original plan was to relocate 60,000 people, the new plan is to move smaller groups in stages. The first settlers are to occupy a former labour camp in Dulan county.

Associated Press / Yahoo

23 January 2002

Tibet's Xigaze Prefecture made marked progress in its afforestation work last year by planting trees on an area of 52,349 mu. The afforestation work greatly improves the prefecture's local environment.

Tibetinfo.com

23 January 2002

More than 400 million yuan will be used this year to assist those farmers whose average annual cash income is less than 1,300 yuan. This year's fund for farmers will be 130 million yuan more than last year's and the aid includes 250 million yuan that will be government grants.

Xinhuanet

24 January 2002

Ten of China's largest enterprises have decided to join hands in an effort to build towns and cities in the west, including the autonomous regions and provinces of Tibet, Xinjiang, Qinghai and Gansu.

Xizang.xinhua.org

24 January 2002

China is aiming to provide basic medical service to 900 million residents in vast rural areas. The network, based on state-funded medical centres in rural towns and villages, will also be composed of private hospitals and clinics with trained staff and standard services. More farmers will be able to afford medical services if they join a pool system, known as "cooperative medical care".

China Topnews

25 January 2002

Plans have been drawn up to build a hydropower station in Xiangjiabain (a location between Yunnan Province's Shuifu County and Sichuan Province's Yibin City) in 2004, and a power station in Xiluodu in the upper reaches of Xiangjiaba (a location between Yunnan Province's Yongshan County and Sichuan Province's Leibo County) in 2006.

Xinhua news agency for Hong Kong, Beijing

26 January 2002

Construction of the Shiya Tunnel, the largest water-diverting project of Dujiangyan Dam, the world's oldest water conservation project, has begun in Zhongjiang County of Sichuan Province. The 6.1 km tunnel will cut short the watercourse by 14 km, increase the flow capacity from 15 cu.m. to 28 cu.m. per second and bring an additional 22,000 ha farmland under irrigation.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing,

28 January 2002

China will issue 300 million yuan-worth of government loans to support the development of vocational and continuing education in China's western areas. The loans will be used to improve education in 186 poverty-stricken counties in the Xinjiang and Tibet autonomous regions. Despite significant progress in vocational and adult education in western China over the past few years, rural residents still enjoy fewer educational opportunities compared with people living in the developed coastal areas of east China.

China Daily

29 January 2002

Local authorities, aiming at tangibly increasing the cash income of the herds people, have been marshalling them to combine farming with their traditional trade of animal husbandry, so as to guarantee their basic income from agricultural produces. The combination has started to pay off in those areas of the autonomous region, where pasturelands are extensive, especially in the Nagqu Prefecture.

Xinhuanet

29 January 2002

There are reportedly over 4,000 registered dial-up Internet users in Tibet. So far, there are more than 100 websites about Tibet in simplified Chinese and over 300,000 related web pages. In Lhasa a 50-metre-long computer street has opened. Recently available Tibetan language software has made it possible for Tibetans to write with Tibetan characters on computers.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

31 January 2002

Experts have warned Tibet that desertification will worsen in the coming years due to the changed weather conditions. Desertification had been worsening since 1999 in the west and northwest of China, including the Tibet Autonomous Region.

Xinhuanet

31 January 2002

China plans to build eight hydroelectric power stations in the middle and lower reaches of the Lancang River in Yunnan province. Upon completion, the power stations will generate 74.1 billion kilowatt-hours of electricity annually, which will be supplied not only for China, but also for southeast Asian countries, it is predicted.

Xinhua News Agency

1 February 2002

On 1 February, President Jiang Zemin stressed on Friday that increasing television and radio broadcasting coverage in the Tibet Autonomous Region would help promote economic development and maintain social stability. Jiang stated that local residents, especial ethnic minority groups, welcomed projects of television and radio broadcasting network expansion.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

1 February 2002

The completion of the first two phases of the "Tibet-Xinjiang project" has greatly enhanced radio and TV broadcasting coverage in the provinces and autonomous regions and allegedly won the wholehearted support of the people of various nationalities. Chinese President Jiang Zemin praised the project and stated, the "goal of transmitting the voice of the party and the state to millions of households has been attained."

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

3 February 2002

China's Ministry of Agriculture and several provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions have helped develop the Tibet Autonomous Region's agriculture by offering funds, technology and professionals. Since the third meeting of the central government on boosting development in Tibet held in 1994, the central government and the relevant provinces have invested 200m yuan in Tibet's agriculture sector.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

6 February 2002

China has been carrying out a programme in Tibet to amplify radio broadcast coverage in an effort to boost development in the remote autonomous region. The overall emission capacity in Tibet has reached 4,000 kW compared with 2,500 kW a year ago. As a result, radio stations have extended their Tibetan language broadcast time from nine to 17 hours per day.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

7 February 2002

Current expansion of broadcasting and media streamlining coincides with a reported clampdown on "illegal" satellite TV in Chinese controlled regions, in order to isolate them from Western culture. Hotels and residential compounds must prove that more than 80 per cent of their occupants are foreigners in order to qualify for access to satellite TV.

BBC Monitoring

11 February 2002

With 30 million people still living below the poverty line in China, poverty has become the biggest obstacle to safeguarding human rights, according to Zhao Qizheng, chief spokesman of the State Council.

20 February 2002

Chinese geologists are reported to have discovered a vast deposit of as much as 100 million tonnes of oil, in a remote part of northern

Tibet. The oil deposit in the Qiangtan Basin extends over 100 kilometres (60 miles). Oil extraction in Tibet's mountains is likely to attract criticism from environmentalists and human rights activists.

BBC

28 February 2002

Yunnan's Diqing Tibetan Prefecture has beautified most of its barren mountains and slopes by covering them with trees through four years' efforts. Currently, streams, birds and animals are once again found in the mountains in the prefecture.

Tibetinfo.com

5 March 2002

China's Vice President Hu Jintao has called for accelerated development in Tibet. He said that that economic development, promoting reforms and improving the people's living standard are of vital importance for Tibet, in order to strengthen the unity of various ethnic groups, maintain social stability, reinforce border defence and safeguard the unification of the motherland.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

5 March 2002

In reporting the comments of China's Vice President with regard to the "stride-over development of the Tibetan economy", the Chinese news agency Xinhua has reported that Tibet is currently enjoying nationality solidarity, social stability and sustained economic development and added that the people are living and working in peace and contentment.

Xinhua news agency domestic service, Beijing

7 March 2002

The municipality of Lhasa is to spend 68.47 million yuan on building three new roads, so as to better the road network of the city. The three roads, including one that allows only pedestrians in downtown Lhasa, will further complete and improve the road network that has already been renovated several times.

Xinhuanet

12 March 2002

Siemens Information and Communication Mobile Group has received an order worth 11 million US dollars from the Chinese mobile operator China Mobile to expand the GSM network in Tibet. Siemens Shanghai Mobile Communications Ltd. (SSMC) will supply and install mobile switching equipment by July 2002.

Financial Times Information Limited – Asia Africa Intelligence Wire

13 March 2002

Lhasa, capital of the Tibet Autonomous Region, is aiming to become an important tourism city as a result of a five-year infrastructure project. Preferential policies and priority efforts will be given to the protection of cultural sites and historical relics in the 1,300-year-old city, and a museum displaying comprehensive history and culture of the ethnic Tibetans will be established.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

14 March 2002

Guo Jinlong, the Chinese Communist Party secretary in Tibet, has said that the region's economic development still lags behind the rest of China despite rapid improvements in recent years. He stated that in Tibet, rural incomes need to be increased, more major construction projects introduced, the investment environment improved, and tourism developed.

Zhongguo Xinwen She news agency, Beijing

18 March 2002

China's transport minister has just pointed out that road construction is key to the development of Tibet in the year 2002. Of the country's eight artery roads to be constructed in 2002, one is located in the Tibet Autonomous Region, to link up Chengdu, capital of the Sichuan Province, with the Zhangmu Pass at the border between Tibet and Nepal.

Xinhuanet

20 March 2002

Zhongdian County in Yunnan Province has changed its name to Shangri-La after the heaven on earth that British author James Hilton described in his pacifist 1933 novel "Lost Horizon". The name change is predicted to draw hordes of tourists seeking paradise.

ABC news

21 Mar 2002

Xinhua reports that building work has commenced on half of the 71 projects to be developed in Tibet with assistance from other Chinese provinces. Eight projects have begun in accordance with a decision made by the central government last June on boosting development in the region. Tibet has received 35bn yuan so far this year for the projects which cover transport, telecommunications, education, urban engineering and Tibetan medicine production.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

5 April 2002

The Telecommunication service in Tibet's Biru County under the Nagqu Prefecture has been greatly enhanced with the completion of a cable network by the end of last year. The cable line, running for more than 90 kilometres with an investment of 10 million yuan, was donated by the China Telecom to the company's Nagqu Prefecture Branch. The completion of the line will greatly help the development of the county's economy.

Tibetinfo.com

5 April 2002

Public health service is to be enhanced in the farming and animal husbandry regions of Tibet, in a bid to safeguard the health of local farmers and herdsmen. The public health service will cover all the counties in Tibet by the year 2010. Also, all the village doctors will receive detailed medical training to upgrade their quality during the 10th Five-Year Plan (2001-2005).

Tibetinfo.com

5 April 2002

With the improved living standards and more cash earnings, learning to drive and owning a car has become a vogue in Lhasa. So far, there are about 20,000 private cars in Lhasa, accounting for about 52.4 per cent of the automobiles in the regional capital.

Tibetinfo.com

8 April 2002

The Tibet Autonomous Region plans to spend about 3bn yuan (about 361m US dollars) on improving transportation facilities and constructing highways in its rural areas. By the end of 2002, rural people in 60 villages and 20 townships are expected to benefit from the investment project, which will connect them with the outside world via new roads.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

9 April 2002

Tibet has launched a two-year reconstruction project aiming to redevelop dilapidated housing in the old urban area of the city of Lhasa. The project will cost 70m yuan (over 8.4m US dollars), and 56 residential compounds, built in the early 20th century, are expected to take on a new look with better living conditions for 1,096 households.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

11 April 2002

A 153-metre-high sighting-seeing tower, the highest building in Tibet, has been opened in Tibet's Lhasa to lure visitors. The tower was donated by Beijing with a fund of five million yuan.

Tibetinfo.com

29 April 2002

China and the European Union (EU) jointly launched a poverty-relief programme in Lhasa on 29 April, to assist 40,000 people in the rural area of Bainang of Tibet. The project, the first one of its kind launched by EU, is designed to develop nine poverty-relief projects and will concentrate on areas such as education, health and drinking water supply.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

10 May 2002

Between 1998 and 2000, Tibet invested more than 10m yuan (1.2m US dollars) in planting 53,000 ha of trees and 67,000 ha of grass, in a bid to end erosion in an area of 1,070 sq.km. The region is currently planning to deal with eight small river valleys by 2005, with a total investment of 78m yuan (9.39m US dollars), covering a total of 250 sq.km. threatened by soil loss.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

11 May 2002

The Canadian government will provide 5.4m Canadian dollars (about 26m yuan) in the next four years for development projects to be implemented in three counties in Tibet, aimed at improving the life of Tibetan people. China's central government has decided to provide a further 14.16m yuan for the projects.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

17 May 2002

More and more farmers and herdsmen in the Tibet Autonomous Region have access to radio and television. At present, 81.7 per cent of the region's population are able to tune into a radio and 80.1 per cent can watch TV programmes. The regional government plans to help give access within three years to the over 4,700 villages in the region which cannot yet use radios and TV.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

17 May 2002

The Chinese government has earmarked 425m yuan this year to improve primary and high school buildings in Tibet.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

24 May 2002

Xinhua reports that Tibet is building a medical system for treating and preventing infectious diseases. It includes construction of new laboratories and an information centre, purchase of advanced medical equipment and training of medical personnel.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

24 May 2002

Chinese President Jiang Zemin has called for greater efforts to deepen reform, expand the opening to the outside world and find a new road of development for the western provinces. He said that the key to resolving all the problems encountered in the development of the western region is to speed up development.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

5 June 2002

China is entering a new tide on the Qinghai-Tibet Railway construction, beginning track-laying on the Ge'ermu-Lhasa section. It is expected that 57.2-kilometer railway from Nanshankou to Naichitai will be finished and put into temporary operation by the end of this year.

Qinghai.news.com

6 June 2002

Qinghai Lake on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau is shrinking due to arid conditions this year and large amounts of water extracted from the lake to irrigate farmland. Nearly 85 percent of the rivers around Qinghai Lake have dried up now, including the Buh River, the lake's largest tributary.

Xinhua

12 June 2002

China will train and recruit more skilled people for the country's western region to support development in the area, according to its 2002-2005 programme for training and recruitment for government, businesses and research institutions issued on 12 June. Through preferential salary and taxation policies, the programme will attract skilled people with higher education who are urgently needed for major projects in west China such as infrastructure construction, environmental protection, and the development of resources and high-tech industries.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

19 June 2002

Qinghai Province has launched a massive 10m yuan (8.2m US dollar) project to control water and soil erosion at the sources of the country's two longest rivers: the Yangtze (Chang Jiang) and Yellow rivers (Huang He).

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

26 June 2002

Participants in a two-day seminar on international assistance for Tibet, held in Beijing on 25 and 26 June, concluded that International groups should further strengthen cooperation the Tibet Autonomous Region. Since 1982, Tibet has received grants and donations totalling 90m US dollars from government and non-government organisations worldwide. David Strawbridge, education adviser of Save the Children Fund (SCF), said that in spite of significant improvements on some key development fronts, the Tibet Autonomous Region still lags behind other provincial areas of China in education. He added that vocational education, which plays an important role in improving the Tibetan people's skills and quality of life, deserves more attention from international organisations.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

29 June 2002

A 3.86m-yuan (465,000 US dollars) fallback fund was allocated on 28 June to nearly 10,000 needy urban citizens in Lhasa, capital of Tibet. Urban households whose per capita monthly income falls below 170 yuan (20 US dollars), the local official bottom-line, will get monthly subsidy of an average 67.7 yuan (8 US dollars).

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

10 July 2002

A 21-member European Parliamentary delegation for relations with China, headed by Elly Plouff-Van Gorsel, arrived in Lhasa Tuesday for a six-day visit to the Tibet Autonomous Region. This is the first time for a European Parliamentary delegation to visit the autonomous region.

People's Daily

24 July 2002

The governments of the three provinces of Sichuan, Yunnan and the Tibet Autonomous Region have signed a joint agreement pinpointing the site of the legendary Shangri-La, which will be turned into a world-class tourist destination by the investment of 80bn yuan (9.64bn US dollars) during the next eight years. The location of the original Shangri-La in the area where the three regions converge has long provoked heated arguments in Sichuan, Yunnan and Tibet.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

25 July 2002

Speaking about his current visit to Tibet, Ma Canrong, China's ambassador to Germany, claimed to have personally witnessed Tibet's enormous achievements in all areas and he saw for himself a brand new Tibet with a stable state of affairs, with its economy developing, with its people united, and full of vigour and vitality. He suggested, "We should introduce Tibet to the outside world more often, thus allowing even more people to understand the true Tibet."

Xinhua news agency domestic service, Beijing

31 July 2002

The University of Tibet is to undergo significant expansion. A new campus in the eastern suburbs of Lhasa will cover an area of 120.9 ha (six times larger than the present campus) and will accommodate an additional 10,000 students. The University is expected to become a key institute of engineering, in response to the future economic and social development demands of Tibet.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

8 August 2002

China's efforts in afforestation have increased forested acreages and have allegedly made the country an international leader in the field. Addressing a forestry training programme in the Tibet Autonomous Region, Li Yucai, deputy director of the State Forestry Administration (SFA), noted that the afforestation campaign in China has helped the country's forest coverage rise from 8.6 per cent in the early 1950s to the present 16.55 per cent, bringing it to 159m hectares. Annual timber production from commercial forests in the country now amounts to over 67m tons, the largest in the world.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

8 August 2002

Tibetans will become a minority in their own capital in the next few years as Han Chinese migrants pour into the city to take part in a new drive to develop Tibet's economy, a senior local official said yesterday. But the influx of investment and skilled labour to Lhasa will bring unprecedented prosperity and stability to the region, said Jin Shixun, deputy director-general of Tibet's Development and Planning Commission. It was one of the boldest admissions yet by a mainland official on the sensitive issue of Han migration to Tibet, a policy that critics say Beijing is encouraging to swamp Tibetan culture. "At the moment the population here in Lhasa stands at around 200,000 – about half of them are the migrant population," he said.

27 August 2002

A record number of 490,000 tourists visited the Tibet Autonomous Region during the first seven months of 2002. The total number of tourists visiting Tibet is expected to exceed last year's record of 620,000.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

29 August 2002

The State Administration of Radio, Film and Television held a meeting on 29 August to make arrangements for the first term of the third phase of the Tibet-Xinjiang radio and television project and said it is to earnestly implement General Secretary Jiang Zemin's important instruction, to continuously do a good job in expanding China's radio and television network to the western area so that the party's voice can be heard by the masses, and China's voice can be spread to all over the world.

Xinhua news agency domestic service, Beijing

2 September 2002

Sixty-four young Tibetans enrolled as freshman students at the Lanzhou Railway Institute, in Gansu Province on 1 September. In three or four years, they will become the first generation of ethnic Tibetan railway engineers and administrators, working on the Qinghai-Tibet Railway. In all, 552 students including 173 Tibetans have enrolled with railway institutes and schools this year to train as professionals for the railway that is still under construction.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing/ SWB 2 September 02

3 September 2002

The Qinghai-Tibet Railway Company was officially founded by the Chinese government on 3 September in the capital of Qinghai Province. The state-owned firm will be responsible for the construction and operation of the Qinghai-Tibet railway, the first rail route linking the Tibet Autonomous Region with the rest of the country.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

16 September 2002

The Chinese central government will spend over 90bn yuan (approx. 10.8bn US dollars) in Tibet during the country's 10th five-year plan period (2001-2005), according to Legao, Chairman of the Tibet Autonomous Region. He further noted that the central government has offered a special policy to Tibet: the government will approve any project benefiting the Tibetan people.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

19 September 2002

Southwest China's Sichuan and Yunnan provinces, along with the Tibet Autonomous Region, have announced that they would work together to develop Shangri-la into a world-class tourist destination. Sichuan, Yunnan and Tibet had all very much wanted to play the "Shangri-La" card, but have now decided to do it together. Tourism officials from each area will present plans for the construction of an ecological tourism zone based on the legendary Shangri-la, which is located at the juncture of the three regions.

Xinhuanet

20 September 2002

According to China Southwest Airlines (CSA), the number of passengers flying to the TAR has been increasing by 20 per cent every year. CSA, who began flying into Lhasa in 1965 and who is currently the only airline company flying to Tibet, has always stressed the importance of Tibet's flight business. During the peak season, July to September, there are average of six flights into Lhasa from ten different routes. Typically, ninety per cent of the passengers are tourists, of which 25 per cent are foreigners, and the remaining 10 per cent are business people and Tibetan students.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

5 October 2002

At the end of 1999, Jinta County in the Hexi Corridor, Gansu Province, began building an information network centre. Consequently, an economic information web site is benefiting local farmers who are able to increase their income due to increased

information exchange. In 2000 more than 300 farmers in Jinta County sold more than 50,000 tons of farm produce and sideline products to other parts of China by using the network information. Two other web sites, for culture and tourism, and human resources are also operational.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

6 October 2002

A monitoring system has started to record environmental changes at the sources of the Yangtze (Chang Jiang), Yellow (Huang He) and the Lancang rivers, in Qinghai Province. The system will provide information on the growth of pasture, soil conditions, the area of desert and semi-desert land and rainfall, thus providing a complete picture of environmental changes critical for the whole world. Due to long-term drought, over-farming and over-herding, the environment in this area has deteriorated in the past four decades. Over the past ten years, half of the four thousand lakes in Madoi County near the source of the Yellow River have disappeared.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

8 October 2002

An expressway connecting the Bai Autonomous Prefecture of Dali and Baoshan in Yunnan Province opened on 29 September. The principal part of the 1,390 metre long railway bridge located at the source of the Yangtze River in Qinghai province was completed on 25 September. Work on the four key bridges along the Qinghai-Tibet Railway is expected to be completed by mid-October.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

8 October 2002

The first non-profit making centre catering for AIDS patients in Yunnan Province opened recently in the provincial capital of Kunming. The centre, called "homeaids", is run jointly by the Yunnan Red Cross and the Hong Kong and Macao Salvation Army. The Australian Agency for International Development has provided 300,000 yuan (36,000 US dollars) to start the project.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

9 October 2002

Xinhua reports the private sector in the Tibet Autonomous Region has developed rapidly in recent years, thanks to a series of preferential policies drafted by the local government to speed its growth. The region had 46,718 individually-run industrial and commercial firms by last June, six per cent up from the same period last year. A regional labour department official described the private sector as a vital new force, which was playing an important role in boosting the region's economic development.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

10 October 2002

A squadron of armed forest police was formally founded on 10 October in the Tibet Autonomous Region to protect the rich local forest and wildlife resources. In recent years, warm and dry weather has posed a severe challenge to natural ecological protection and forest fire prevention in the region. Liu Yuan, deputy political commissar of Chinese People's Armed Police Force, said the

founding of the special police unit marks a new phase of Tibet's ecological building and forest protection.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

13 October 2002

Mingjun Village in northwestern Yunnan Province has been transformed from a small settlement of two Tibetan families, into the nation's first non-governmental nature reserve. The Xiangbala Nature Reserve was set up by two Tibetans living in the village, in Shangrila County, and a Tibetan who returned to the village several years ago. The nature reserve now covers 10 sq. km., and is home to 70 families with 363 people. The locals mainly live on agriculture and grazing livestock but there are plans to develop environment-friendly tourism and agriculture to increase their incomes.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

20 October 2002

Construction has begun on the 142m-yuan (17m-US-dollar) modern agriculture demonstration project in the Tibet Autonomous Region. The project, known as Tibetan Modern Agriculture Demonstration Zone and located 8 km southeast of Lhasa, will be used to showcase and promote modern agricultural technology and train local farmers and herdsman.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

23 October 2002

Approximately 4,000 households in Tibet have gone online through their telephone lines and in all six prefectures of Tibet people have access to the Internet. Traditional communication, from land lines and mobile phones to televisions, are being widely applied as well. Public telephones using smart cards are scattered around the streets of Lhasa, and 100 more have been set up in the city in recent days.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

24 October 2002

The distance between Lhasa, the capital of the Tibet Autonomous Region, and Gongga Airport will be almost halved to 53 km when a gigantic infrastructure project is completed in 2004. The project, including two highway bridges over the Lhasa and the Yarlung Zangbo rivers and a 2,426-metre-long tunnel, will have a total road length of 13.28 km, said Sun Benla, an official of the autonomous regional development planning committee. It currently takes one and a half hours to travel the 98-km journey from Lhasa to the airport.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

7 November 2002

In an effort to improve the professional skills of Tibetan officials, eight prestigious universities across China are to enrol a total of 120 university postgraduates per year for the next five years. All applicants must be university graduates who have worked in a government department or institution for at least three years, and must agree to return to Tibet after graduation.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

12 November 2002

During a press conference given by the 16th CPC National Congress, Raidi, chairman of the Standing Committee of the Tibet Autonomous Region People's Congress, stated during the past 13 years, Tibet has experienced the most rapid development in the whole of its history. He said that Tibet's economy has been growing at a rate of over 11 per cent, which is above the average growth rate of the entire country, herdsmen now ride motorcycles to herd their animals, and according to 2001 statistics, Tibet's utilisation rate of cell phones was the highest in the entire country.

Zhongguo Xinwen She news agency, Beijing

15 November 2002

The Tibet Autonomous Region had carried out a series of measures to make it easier for tourists to travel there and more steps will be taken before 2005, according to Man Hongwei, vice-director of the Tourism Bureau of the Tibet Autonomous Region. Tibet would also encourage investors from home and overseas to support tourism development in areas such as travel agencies, hotels and restaurants. After 20 years of development, tourism had become a pillar industry of Tibet, accounting for six per cent of Tibet's gross domestic product last year.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

18 November 2002

Private businesses in the Tibet Autonomous Region are playing a bigger role in creating jobs and paying taxes. Official statistics indicate that between 1997 and 2001, 22, 278 people have been employed by the region's private enterprises, where the annual increase in job opportunities averages 5,570. To boost the region's economy, the local government has outlined a package of preferential policies to attract businessmen to invest there and promised equal treatment for all newcomers no matter how big their businesses or what their ethnic minorities.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

28 November 2002

Construction of a 91-km highway leading to the new Jiuzhai-Huanglong Airport being built on the site of the Jiuzhaigou and Huanglong scenic zones in Sichuan Province is under way, with the completion date of August 2003 for both the airport and the highway.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

2 December 2002

Construction of the Highland Atmospheric Environment Open Lab of Tibet Autonomous Region has been completed and is expected to commence operations very soon. Built at a cost of 10m yuan (1.2m US dollars), the lab will greatly enhance Tibet's meteorological observation and research capability, and will help to forecast and monitor forest fires, droughts, snowstorms, floods and other natural disasters.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

4 December 2002

The fourth generating unit of the Dachaoshan hydroelectric power plant in Yunnan Province, a key project in China's west-to-east power transmission scheme, has gone into operation. The last two generating units are scheduled to be installed in 2003.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

24 December 2002

The first map in China with provincial boundaries having a legally binding force was completed on 24 December, marking a success in internal boundary demarcation. The Administrative Map of the People's Republic of China was jointly made by the Ministry of Civil Affairs and the State Bureau of Surveying and Mapping on a scale of 1/4,000,000 and will be published by the China Cartographic Publishing House.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

27 December 2002

Thanks to new drinking water projects, 188,000 farmers and herdsmen in the Tibet Autonomous Region have had access to clean drinking water this year. A total of 1,174 small drinking water projects were constructed in Tibet since May. These projects supply drinking water to 188,000 farmers and herdsmen, and 2.2m head of domestic animals in 918 villages.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing



Hoarding next to the construction site of the Golmud Lhasa Railway: "Fight for number 1, never accept defeat".

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2 Policies and Leaders

Two major new developments have marked the year 2002: the advent of a new Chinese leadership and the resumption of a direct contact between Tibetan exiles and the Chinese authorities.

After almost a decade of standstill, the visit of a delegation of envoys of the Dalai Lama to China and Tibet in September 2002 re-opened direct communications between Beijing and Dharamsala. Though this development potentially opened new perspectives for a resolution of the Tibet question, compared with the dialogue which took place in the 1980s, when the then Chinese leader Deng Xiaoping stated that "everything could be discussed except independence", the contact so far seems to have been handled on the Chinese side at a lower level and under the assumption that Tibetan exiles and the Dalai Lama have to accept the status quo of the PRC's full control of Tibet and Tibetan affairs. If the talks which took place between the Chinese authorities and the envoys of the Dalai Lama have been reported as being more open, more matter of fact and friendlier in tone than in the past, they do not provide any apparent clue as to how a mutually acceptable formula about the future governance of Tibet would look, nor whether the Chinese authorities would accept discussing these matters with the Tibetan side at all. It is remarkable that the visit of the Tibetan delegation took place just a few weeks before the end of tenure of the outgoing Chinese leadership, a fact that could underline the importance but also the sensitivity of the Tibet question in China.

With the 16th National Congress of the Chinese Communist Party held in Beijing on 8-15 November 2002, a new, younger leadership has gained power, which, unlike former leaderships, possesses a fair understanding of the general situation in the western provinces of the

PRC. Since the Party Congress has not set any perceptibly innovative programmatic accents, it remains to be seen to what extent and in which regard this apparent 'West bias' of the new leadership will affect the future developments in Tibet.

TIN NEWS STORY

TIN NEWS UPDATE, 13 SEPTEMBER 2002 (EDITED)

Lodi Gyari's visit to China: a significant development

A four-person delegation led by the Dalai Lama's Special Envoy, Lodi Gyaltzen Gyari (Gyari Rinpoche), is due to arrive in Lhasa today as part of a visit to China and Tibet. The visit could be highly significant, since there has been no formal contact between the Dalai Lama and Beijing since the summer of 1993 when contact was suspended. The delegation, which also includes the Dalai Lama's Envoy Kalsang Gyaltzen, arrived in Beijing on 9 September. The Chinese Foreign Ministry, in confirming the visit, downplayed its significance by referring to the delegation as expatriate Tibetans visiting Tibet "in a private capacity". No details have been given of any meetings with Chinese officials, although a Chinese Foreign Ministry official indicated that they would have opportunities to meet people "at all levels".

In the early months of 2002, the early releases of six high-profile Tibetan political prisoners as well as other subtle movement on the part of the Chinese authorities had led to speculations about a thaw in the Sino-Tibetan relationship. In July 2002, Gyalo Thondup, the elder brother of the Dalai Lama, visited Beijing and, surprisingly, Lhasa. While not an

official representative of the Dalai Lama, Gyalo Thondup has visited China several times during the past decade, but he had no opportunity to go to Tibet. Returning from the visit in July, Gyalo Thondup commented that he felt very hopeful about the possibility of a dialogue between China and the Dalai Lama's government-in-exile.

BACKGROUND

The resumption of the Dharamsala-Beijing contact and the United Front Department

The United Front Department of the Communist Party is believed to have played an essential role in the upcoming meeting between envoys of the Dalai Lama and Chinese officials, their first direct contact for almost a decade. Indirect communications between the Chinese authorities and the Tibetans in exile apparently go back as far as 2000. In Summer 2002, only a few weeks before the visit of the delegation, Sithar (Chin: Sita), became the first ever Tibetan to head the second Bureau of the United Front Department. The second Bureau normally deals with minorities and Tibetan affairs. Sithar originates from Derge in Eastern Tibet and is probably the only Tibetan official in the Chinese state service known to have had long term contact with Tibetans living in exile. He worked as a diplomat in the Chinese embassy in Switzerland in the 1990s and had been previously posted to New Delhi, India, thus working successively in two countries well-known for hosting Tibetan refugees. He was also the 'leader' of the group of Chinese and Tibetan scholars who participated in the 9th Seminar of the International Association of Tibetan Studies (IATS) held in Leiden, the Netherlands in 2000. These seminars provide a rare opportunity for Tibetan scholars from inside and outside Tibet to meet. Sithar acted as accompanying host during the Tibetan delegation's trip through China and Tibet in September 2002. Coincidentally, Zhu Xiaoming, the former head of the second Bureau was promoted to executive deputy head of the department. TIN sources state that Zhu played an important role in the preparations for the trip of the Dalai Lama delegation. Although decisions related to a possible resumption of the Sino-Tibetan dialogue are doubtless taken at the highest party level and not at that of a relative subaltern level, like that of the United Front Department, these personnel developments within the department demonstrate approval of the contact process by the highest ranks of the party, as well as their attention to it.

TIN NEWS STORY

TIN NEWS UPDATE, 01 OCTOBER 2002 (EDITED)

"Dispelling distrust and misconception" – Dalai Lama envoys return from Tibet.

A four-person delegation led by Lodi Gyari and Kelsang Gyaltsen, envoys of the Dalai Lama based in the USA and Europe respectively and their aides Buchung Tsering and Dakpo, travelled to Dharamsala, base of the Tibetan government-in-exile, on 27 September 2002 following an 18-day tour of China and Tibet. In a carefully worded but confident statement released by Lodi Gyari the following day, the mission was described as an attempt to *"create a conducive atmosphere enabling direct face-to-face meetings on a regular basis in the future"* which according to the Dalai Lama's comments reported in the statement *"will lead to a mutually acceptable solution"*. The statement makes clear that the delegation was putting forward the *"Middle Way Approach"* advocated by the Dalai Lama for a topic of dialogue. This would give *"genuine autonomy"* to Tibet as opposed to either continued direct rule from Beijing, or total independence as desired by many in the exile Tibetan community.

The prime minister of the Tibetan government-in-exile, Prof. Samdhong Rinpoche was *"thoroughly briefed"* by Lodi Gyari according to the statement. Samdhong Rinpoche then told the Tibetan exile-parliament in Dharamsala that he thought it was too early to tell whether the visit by Lodi Gyari's delegation would lead to actual negotiations on the future of Tibet, but said he hoped negotiations could start in July 2003. Lodi Gyari's statement expresses optimism that the visit has laid the foundations for *"a new chapter in our relationship"* with China, and the Dalai Lama is reported in the statement as being *"very pleased that a new contact has been established"*.

Lodi Gyari, who led a similar delegation in the early 1980s, states: *"What impressed us more this time was the much greater flexibility displayed by the current leaders in their mental attitude"*. The statement includes an acknowledgement of the *"dedication and competence"* of *"many Tibetan officials"* in their *"efforts"* to develop the Tibetan economy, but mentions only that the delegation *"learned about"* development projects, and stresses the need for development to be conducted in tandem with the preservation of *"Tibet's distinct cultural, religious and linguistic heritage"*.

Only a rough outline of the delegation's itinerary and the nature of discussions is currently known. The optimistic tone of the statement suggests that the delegation is determined to develop the dialogue process further and is unwilling to jeopardise progress by revealing too many details of discussions. Following their arrival in Beijing, the delegation met with Wang Zhaoguo, head of the United Front Work Department (UFW) and vice-chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Congress (CPPCC), and Li Dezhu, minister at the State Ethnic Affairs Commission (SEAC) and deputy head of the UFW. The statement reports that discussions were *"frank"* and held in a *"cordial atmosphere"* as the delegation relayed the

Dalai Lama's position of *"reconciliation and dialogue"*. Lodi Gyari appears to have been genuinely impressed with the Beijing officials, saying in his statement, *"The Chinese leaders listened to our explanation with keen interest and engaged in free and spontaneous exchanges. We appreciated this greatly."*

While in Beijing, the delegation also met with Ngapo Ngawang Jigme, vice chairman of the CPPCC, and ex-governor of the traditional Tibetan area of Kham. He was also one of the signatories to the '17-Point Agreement' in 1951.¹ The delegation also met several high-ranking officials from the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) government and Party, including Ragdi, chairman of the TAR People's Congress and deputy Party Secretary; Legchog, chairman of the TAR government and deputy Party Secretary, and Samdrup, head of the TAR UFW. However, the most powerful TAR official, Party Secretary Guo Jinlong, did not receive the delegation. The delegation also met with Atrin, vice-chairman of Sichuan province CPPCC. This meeting is significant because Beijing has categorically refused discussion of Tibetan areas outside the TAR during previous dialogue with representatives of the Dalai Lama². This may indicate a softening in Beijing's line towards subject matters in the dialogue process. Legchog, however, maintained the usual hard-line stance against the Dalai Lama during the delegation's visit to Tibet, when he made a lengthy denunciation of the Dalai Lama's political intentions at a press conference on 16 September for visiting foreign correspondents. Furthermore, during a concurrent official visit to Denmark, Chinese Premier Zhu Rongji described the issue of human rights abuses in Tibet as *"conjured tales"*, and also criticised foreign support given to the Dalai Lama.

Both Zhu Rongji and Legchog referred to the importance of foreign investment in Tibetan areas. Legchog used the opportunity of the press conference on 16 September to

1 See TIN Special Report 21 May 2001: "A turning point in Tibet's history: the 17-Point Agreement"

2 The traditional Tibetan areas of Kham and Amdo, where the majority of Tibetans live, are now incorporated into the Chinese provinces of Qinghai, Gansu, Sichuan and Yunnan.

say that the central government has offered a "special policy" on Tibet, approving "any project which benefits the Tibetan people". He also re-stated the central government's estimate that RMB90bn (approx €9.3bn/USD10.8bn; GBP6.9bn) of central government funds will be invested in the TAR during the 10th Five-Year Plan (2001 - 2005).

Previous Tibetan delegations in the 1980s surprised Beijing with the popular support they received in Tibet. By contrast, Lodi Gyari's delegation was carefully shielded. Like Lodi Gyari's delegation, the Dalai Lama's elder brother Gyalo Thundup's visit to Tibetan areas earlier in 2002 also coincided with press trips for foreign correspondents organised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. While members of each of the press trips are known to have requested contact with Gyalo Thondup and with Lodi Gyari's delegation, permission was refused. This indicates that even though the Chinese authorities were willing to draw attention to exiled Tibetans visiting in a "private capacity", they stopped short of allowing them to discuss their views with the foreign press. As well as meeting with government officials, the delegation visited important religious sites, such as the Jokhang Temple and Potala Palace in Lhasa, and Tashi Lhunpo Monastery in Shigatse – visits the statement describes as "moving experiences".

On 26 September, while Lodi Gyari's delegation was still in China, a spokesman for the Dalai Lama said that the Dalai Lama wished to make a pilgrimage to Wutai Shan in Shanxi province, a holy mountain significant because it is the most

important Tibetan Buddhist site in mainland China. As such, historically it has represented a point of contact between Tibetan high lamas and the Chinese establishment. The Dalai Lama has been requesting permission to go on pilgrimage to the mountain since 1985.

The visit to Tibet and China by the delegation is highly significant in the history of dialogue between Beijing and the Tibetan exile community, representing the first official contact since communication between Beijing and Dharamsala broke down in 1993. However, Lodi Gyari emphasises that this is a beginning when he states: "We have made every effort to create the basis for opening a new chapter in our relationship. We are well aware that this task cannot be completed in a single visit." He also states that the process "will need continued persistent support and effort from many sides".

Samdhong Rinpoche's office released a circular on 30 September, urging "all Tibetans and friends of Tibet" to refrain from public protest during President Jiang Zemin's upcoming visit to the USA and Mexico, and that the visits should be used to "test China's response". Stating that there is now "an indication" that Beijing is willing to begin discussions, the circular concludes: "This is a crucial time in our non-violent struggle. It is of utmost importance that the worldwide Tibet movement is able to arrive at a unified position on important issues such as this. It will be a strong gesture for dialogue, non-violence and reconciliation during a time when the international community is threatened by terrorism, violence and war cries."

DOCUMENT

Public statement issued by Lodi Gyari, special envoy of the Dalai Lama, after the visit of the Tibetan delegation to Tibet and China

We returned to Dharamsala, India, on September 27, 2002, from our visit to Beijing, Chengdu, Shanghai as well as the Tibetan capital Lhasa, and areas in Nyingtri and Shigatse.

The task that my colleague Envoy Kelsang Gyaltsen and I had on this trip was two fold. First, to re-establish direct contact with the leadership in Beijing and to create a conducive atmosphere enabling direct face-to-face meetings on a regular basis in future. Secondly, to explain His Holiness the Dalai Lama's Middle Way Approach towards resolving the issue of Tibet. Throughout the trip we were guided by this objective. Consequently, we focused our effort towards building confidence by dispelling distrust and misconception.

We have reported to Holiness the Dalai Lama about our visit. Over the years, His Holiness has made consistent efforts to re-establish contact with the Chinese leadership. His Holiness welcomed the positive gesture of the leadership in Beijing in receiving our delegation and was very pleased that a renewed contact had been established. He instructed us to make full use of the opportunity created and continue our efforts to advance this process vigorously, which will lead to a mutually acceptable solution.

Envoy Kelsang Gyaltzen and I, accompanied by two assistants, began our visit on September 9, 2002. During our visit we met officials in Beijing, Lhasa as well as in other areas. We learned from them about the progress made in the Tibetan areas as well as about the developmental projects undertaken. We have been impressed by the dedication and competency displayed by many of the Tibetan officials. While encouraging and admiring their efforts to develop Tibet economically, we drew their attention to the importance of paying equal attention to preserving Tibet's distinct cultural, religious and linguistic heritage. The officials also informed us about the importance they attached to protecting Tibet's delicate environment. We took the opportunity to share our thoughts on this issue.

Among the Tibetan officials we met were Mr. Ngapo Ngawang Jigme, Vice Chair of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC); Mr. Ragdi, the Chairman of the Tibet Autonomous Region People's Congress and Deputy Party Secretary; Mr. Legchok, Chairman of the Tibet Autonomous Region Government and Deputy Party Secretary; Mr. Samdup, Head of the Tibet Autonomous Region United Front Work Department; and Mr. Atrin, Vice Chair of the Sichuan Province Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference.

In addition to meeting officials we had the moving experience of being able to offer our prayers in the Jokhang and the Potala. We were also able to visit Norbu Lingka, Ganden, Tashi Lhunpo, and Palkhor Choeten in Gyantse. Our stay in Tibet had been short. Consequently, there was little opportunity to interact with ordinary Tibetans.

We had the opportunity to visit some areas of Chengdu, Shanghai and Beijing and were greatly impressed with the progress and development that have taken place. We also visited some of the sacred Buddhist sites in these areas.

In Beijing we met with Mr. Wang Zhaoguo, Vice Chair of the CPPCC and the Head of the Central United Front Work Department and Mr. Li De Zhu, Minister for Nationalities Affairs and Deputy Head of the United Front Work Department. We had frank exchanges of views with them in a cordial atmosphere. They reiterated the known position of the Chinese government on dialogue with His Holiness the Dalai Lama. We took the opportunity to explain His Holiness the Dalai Lama's thoughts on resolving the issue of Tibet through negotiations in the spirit of reconciliation and dialogue. The Chinese leaders listened to our explanation with keen interest and engaged in free and spontaneous exchanges. We appreciated this greatly. Since I had the opportunity to meet Chinese leaders in Beijing in the early 1980s, what impressed us more this time was the much greater flexibility displayed by the current leaders in their mental attitude.

Our host on this visit was the United Front Work Department of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Many other authorities, including the Tibet Autonomous Region Government, governments of Sichuan and Shanghai, have been involved in organising our visit. We wish to express our sincere appreciation to all of them for their hospitality and assistance.

We have made every effort to create the basis for opening a new chapter in our relationship. We are fully aware that this task cannot be completed during a single visit. It will also need continued persistent effort and support from many sides. Mr. Kelsang Gyaltzen and I deeply appreciate the firm support and full cooperation that we have been receiving from the Kalon Tripa, Prof. Samdhong Rinpoche, and the Kashag, whom we have thoroughly briefed about our trip.

Dharamsala, September 28, 2002

DOCUMENT

Message issued by Samdhong Rinpoche, Prime Minister of the Tibetan government in exile after the return of the Tibetan delegation

After the return of the Tibetan delegation headed by Lodi Gyari, Samdhong Rinpoche, the Prime Minister of the Tibetan government in exile in Dharamsala, India, issued a public statement in which he appealed to his compatriots, as well as to Tibet supporters worldwide, not to demonstrate during the forthcoming visit of President Jiang Zeming to North America. Although it is expressively meant to be a demonstration of good will towards the PRC and its move to re-launch the contact with the Dalai Lama, Samdhong Rinpoche's appeal raised consternation and criticism among the Tibetan exile community, as well as among some international Tibet support groups. The appeal was not always followed, and when it was, it was only very reluctantly. The following is the complete text of Samdhong Rinpoche's message.

Dharamsala (India), 30 september 2002

Dear fellow Tibetans and friends of Tibet,

In recent times there have been some positive development in our effort to re-establish contact with the Chinese leadership. As you all know, Special Envoy Lodi Gyaltsen Gyari and Envoy Kelsang Gyaltsen visited Beijing and Lhasa from 9-24 September 2002 and met Chinese leaders and senior officials. On their return, they reported to His Holiness the Dalai Lama and the Kashag that they had been encouraged by their discussions with the Chinese leadership. This gives us hope that we can open a new chapter in our relationship and start a process of dialogue, leading to negotiations toward resolving the issue of Tibet.

His Holiness welcomed Beijing's positive gesture in receiving our delegation and was very pleased that the contact has been renewed. He instructed the Kashag and his envoys to make full use of the new opportunity and continue our efforts to advance this process vigorously.

The Kashag reported the latest development to the Assembly of Tibetan People's Deputies during its recent session. We have informed the Assembly that we will respond to the Chinese gesture by devoting the period till June 2003 towards creating a conducive atmosphere for building on the new contact. I look forward to the cooperation of the Tibetans and friends of Tibet in this endeavour.

In October, Chinese President Jiang Zemin is visiting the United States and Mexico. In the past Tibetans and Tibet supporters throughout the world had used the opportunity of Chinese leaders' visits to convey their feelings through peaceful rallies and demonstrations. One of the objectives of such actions was to encourage the Chinese leaders to respond to His Holiness the Dalai Lama's initiatives for a negotiated settlement of the

Tibetan problem. Now that there is an indication that the Chinese leadership may be willing to start discussing with us, we could use the opportunity of President Jiang's visit to test China's response. I want to urge all Tibetans and friends of Tibet to refrain from public actions like rallies and demonstrations during President Jiang's visit to the United States and Mexico.

This is a crucial time in our nonviolent struggle. It is of utmost importance that the worldwide Tibet movement is able to arrive at a unified position on important issues such as this. It will be a strong gesture for dialogue, nonviolence and reconciliation during a time when the international community is threatened by terrorism, violence and war cries.

Prof. Samdhong Rinpoche
Kalon Tripa

BACKGROUND

Reactions to the visit of the Tibetan delegation in Tibet

The trip of the delegation to Tibet and China in September 2002 generated unease among both Chinese and Tibetan cadres working on Tibetan affairs in Lhasa, Beijing and other administrative centres of the PRC. Subsequent to the visit, an array of speculations about the possible future of the Tibetan leadership in the TAR arose. Reports from Tibet suggested that by the end of 2002, Lhakpa Phuntsog, a relatively popular Tibetan leader who met with the delegation of the Dalai Lama, could be promoted to the post of Party Secretary of the TAR. An interesting rumour mentioned a presumed imminent return of former Deputy Party Secretary Tenzin (Chinese: Danzeng) to the TAR. Tenzin, who is known for a culturally sensitive approach to policies, had been transferred to a non-political post in the Chinese Writers' Association in Beijing in 2001 after being accused in Party circles of failing to object to the display of a photograph of the Dalai Lama during the visit of a monastery in Nagchu area. Tenzin is known to have been for many years the political rival of Ragdi (Chinese: Raidi), the mightiest Tibetan leader in the TAR. After a short time in Beijing, though, he was compensated for his de facto demotion with a high Party post in Kunming in Yunnan province. Several sources assumed that Ragdi would be transferred to the National People's Congress in Beijing to become the "successor" of Ngapoe Ngawang Jigme.³ Among those speculations, only the latter was partially realised with Ragdi's departure of his TAR posts in early 2003. He was promoted to the prestigious post of vice-Chairman of the National People's Congress (NPC) in Beijing and can, so far, rightly be regarded as Ngapoe Ngawang Jigme's 'successor'.



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3. Ngapoe Ngawang Jigme was the Tibetan signatory of the 17 points agreement between Tibet and the PRC in 1951. He and the late Panchen Lama have been the key Tibetan figureheads of the regime and held several representative posts. However, unlike the Panchen Lama, who could foster room for political manoeuvre, Ngapoe never seems to have had any real power.

TIN NEWS STORY

TIN NEWS UPDATE, 19 NOVEMBER 2002 (EDITED)

The legacy of Hu Jintao in Tibet

Hu Jintao, former Party Secretary of the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) was installed as the General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) at the 16th National Congress of the CCP held in Beijing 8-15 November 2002. He replaces Jiang Zemin as Chairman of the Party, and is likely to assume Jiang's position as State President at the National People's Congress (NPC) in March 2003. Cadres in the TAR remember Hu as a largely absent and ineffectual leader, and cite Hu's patronage for Ragdi, the TAR Party Executive Deputy Secretary, as the reason for Ragdi's prominence.

According to a former TAR official, Hu Jintao left an overwhelmingly poor impression on cadres in Tibet during his tenure from December 1988 to March 1992. The ex-official said: *"We could not find in Hu Jintao any special ability as a politician. The party secretaries are normally those who hold the real power, and his predecessor [Wu Jinghua] left at least certain achievements. But there are no achievements you could assign to Hu Jintao"*. However, the ex-official also told TIN that there were rumours among cadres in Tibet that Hu feigned illness in order to spend as much time away from Tibet as he could. Many common Tibetans did not even know his name.

Hu Jintao spent most of his time in Beijing, reportedly seeking medical treatment. Indeed, Hu did not return again to Tibet after October 1990, instead spending his time in Beijing forging the alliances which would propel him up through the ranks of the Party.

Hu Jintao is thought to have personally suggested to the Chinese central government declaring martial law in the TAR in March 1989, which is regarded in Beijing as proof of his commitment to the Party line. However, many Tibetan cadres see it as evidence of his lack of political skill.

Hu Jintao's tenure was also crucial in the career of Ragdi, the most powerful ethnic Tibetan leader in the TAR, who was re-elected at the 16th Party Congress as a member of the Party's Central Committee. During his long absences from Tibet, Hu delegated his authority to Ragdi which then gave Ragdi the opportunity to establish the strong position he has enjoyed ever since.

Ragdi, who originates from Nagchu [Ch: Naqu] prefecture north of Lhasa, was the head of a faction of red guards during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) and became a prominent member of the local Revolutionary Committee (government administrations in the PRC during the Cultural Revolution). As such he was likely to have been demoted or removed from office following the political reforms introduced by Deng Xiaoping in 1978.

However, Ragdi probably benefited from association with Hu Yaobang, who was appointed Chairman of the CCP in 1981 and General Secretary in 1982. Both Ragdi and Hu Yaobang knew each other from their time together at the Central Party School in Beijing, where they belonged to the same Party group in the late seventies. Ragdi is said to have shown a willing and compliant attitude towards Hu Yaobang and other high officials at the school, who then pleaded Ragdi's case to remain in office.

A popular saying in the TAR compares Ragdi with a stone fixed in a river bed, while different Party secretaries are carried away by the current. Many Tibetan cadres, aware of his influence and benefactors, have rallied to Ragdi who has provided them with posts in the Party and local administration, thereby ensuring loyal support for himself and creating a solid power base.



The new monument for 'peaceful liberation' in front of the Potala.

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China's new leadership: The Standing Committee of the Politburo of the 16th Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party

Hu Jintao

CCP General Secretary

Born December 1942 in Anhui. Hydropower engineer, Qinghua University. Chinese Communist Party member since 1964. Chinese Communist Party posts from 1974-1992 in Gansu, Guizhou (Secretary 1985-1988), Tibet Autonomous Region (Secretary 1988-1992). Presided over martial law in Lhasa March 1989-April 1990. Head of Communist Youth League (1982-1985) and All China Youth Federation (1982-1984). Chinese Communist Party Central Committee since 1982. Politburo and Standing Committee since 1992. Head of Party School since 1993. Vice-Chairman of Central Military Commission since 1999. Hu is said to have been chosen as a successor by Deng Xiaoping in 1992.

Wu Bangguo

Born July 1941 in Anhui. Electronic engineer, Qinghua University. Chinese Communist Party member since 1964. Chinese Communist Party Shanghai Municipal Committee from 1983-1992 (Deputy Secretary 1985-1991; Secretary 1991-1994). Chinese Communist Party Central Committee since 1982; Politburo since 1992; Standing Committee in 2002. State Council posts include Vice-Premier responsible for industry (since 1998), member of Leading Party Members' Group and Secretary of Central Work Committee of Large Enterprises (since 1999).

Wen Jiabao

Born September 1942 in Tianjin. Engineer, Beijing Institute of Geology. Chinese Communist Party member since 1965. Geology posts 1968-1985, starting in Gansu, ending as Vice-Minister of Geology and Mineral Resources (1983-1985). Director of General Office of Chinese Communist Party Central Committee 1986-1993; Central Committee since 1987; Politburo since 1992; Secretary of Central Committee. Financial Work Committee. since 1998; Standing Committee in 2002. State Council Vice-Premier and member of Leading Party Members' Groups since 1998.

Jia Qinglin

Born March 1940 in Hebei. Electrical appliance engineer, Hebei Engineering College. Chinese Communist Party member since 1959. Posts in heavy machinery manufacture in Hebei, Jiangxi, Shanxi Provinces 1962-1985. General Manager, China National Machinery and Equipment Import and Export Corporation 1978-1983. Posts on Chinese Communist Party Fujian Provincial Committee 1985-1996; Deputy Secretary 1986-1993; Secretary 1993-1996. Chairman of Fujian People's Congress 1994-1996. Secretary of Chinese Communist Party Beijing Municipal Committee. 1996-2002. Chinese Communist Party Central Committee since 1992; Politburo since 1997; Standing Committee in 2002.

Zeng Qinghong

Born July 1939 in Jiangxi. Engineer (automatic control), Beijing Institute of Technology. Chinese Communist Party member since 1960. People's Liberation Army technician 1963-1965. Posts in industry and government 1965-1984, including Secretary of General Office of State Planning Committee 1979-1981, Deputy Division. Director of General Office of State Energy Commission 1981-1982, Deputy Director of Foreign Affairs Bureau of Ministry of Petroleum Industry; Secretary of Chinese Communist Party Committee of South and Yellow Seas Petroleum Corporation. Chinese Communist Party Shanghai Municipal Committee 1984-1989 (Deputy Secretary 1986-1989). General Office of Chinese Communist Party Central Committee 1989-1997 (Director 1993-1997). Chinese Communist Party Central Committee and Politburo since 1997; Standing Committee 2002.

Huang Ju

Born September 1938 in Zhejiang. Electrical machinery engineer, Qinghua University Chinese Communist Party member since 1966. Posts in machinery and metallurgical units in Shanghai 1963-1982, rising from technician to manager. Chinese Communist Party and government industry posts in Shanghai 1982-1984. Chinese Communist Party Shanghai Municipal Committee 1983-2002 (Standing Committee 1984; Deputy Secretary 1985; Secretary 1994-2002). Deputy Mayor of Shanghai 1986; Mayor in 1994. Chinese Communist Party Central Committee since 1987; Politburo since 1994; Standing Committee in 2002.

Wu Guanzheng

Born August 1938 in Jiangxi. Engineer (thermal measurement, auto-control), Qinghua University. Chinese Communist Party since 1962. Party and professional posts (science/technology) in Wuhan 1968-1982. Wuhan Chinese Communist Party Committee. (Standing Comm. 1982; Secretary 1983-1986). Mayor of Wuhan 1983-1986. Jiangxi Governor/Deputy Governor 1986-1995. Jiangxi Chinese Communist Party Committee (Deputy Secretary 1986-1995, Secretary 1995-1997). President Shandong Party School 1997-2002. Secretary of Shandong Chinese Communist Party Commission 2002. Chinese Communist Party Central Committee since 1982; Politburo since 1997; Standing Committee 2002. Secretary of Chinese Communist Party Central Commission for Discipline Inspection in 2002. Cracked down on Falun Gong in Shandong.

Li Changchun

Born February 1944 in Liaoning. Automation engineer, Harbin Institute of Technology. Chinese Communist Party since 1965. Professional and Party posts in electric machinery industry in Shenyang 1968-1981. Shenyang Chinese Communist Party Committee 1981-1986 (Secretary 1983-1986). Shenyang Mayor/Vice-Mayor 1982-1985. Deputy Secretary of Liaoning Chinese Communist Party Comm. 1985-1990. Liaoning Governor/Vice-governor. 1986-1990. Henan Chinese Communist Party Committee 1990-1998 (Deputy Secretary 1990-1993, Secretary 1993-1998). Henan Governor/Vice-Governor. 1990-1992. Chairman of Henan People's Congress 1993-1998. Secretary of Guangdong Chinese Communist Party Committee. since 1998. Chinese Communist Party Central Committee since 1982; Politburo since 1997; Standing Committee in 2002.

Luo Gan

Born July 1935 in Shandong. East Germany 1954-1962. Metal casting engineer, Freiburg Institute of Mining and Metallurgy. First Ministry of Machine-Building Industry 1962-1980. Secretary Henan Chinese Communist Party Commission. Henan Vice-government 1981-1983. Vice-chair All China Federation of Trade Unions 1983-1988. Secretary General State Council, Secretary Leading Party Members' Group of Government Offices of State Council, Secretary of Chinese Communist Party State Organs Work Commission 1988-1998. State Councillor since 1993. Leading Party Members' Group since 1998. Chinese Communist Party Central Commission. since 1982; Politburo since 1997; Standing Committee. in 2002. Chinese Communist Party Political and Legislative Affairs Committee. since 1993 (Secretary since 1998). Law and order campaigns, crackdown on banned groups, executions.

BACKGROUND

The West bias of the new Communist Party leadership

The 16th Chinese Communist Party (CCP) Congress in November 2002 brought significant changes in the geographical distribution of the Chinese leadership. Whereas the outgoing leadership had a strong coastal China orientation, a large number of the new, 'Fourth Generation' has strong roots in the inner provinces of the country as well as a background in the Chinese Communist Youth League (CCYL), which served as a cadre school for decades. This led some China analysts to consider that China is moving towards a 'regionalisation' of power. The assumption that the biography of the new leaders and the specific experience they gathered in the inner provinces, as well as possible personal commitments, is likely to shape their policies raises the question as to what extent this new development may affect the Tibetan regions of the PRC.

Indeed, among the new leaders who have their background in the inner provinces of the PRC, it is apparent that those from the western regions have been better considered for promotion than ever before, which may reflect the growing attention of the Chinese leadership to these regions. This is also the case for the five provinces that incorporate the

historical and ethnic Tibet (TAR, Sichuan, Qinghai, Gansu and Yunnan). The number of members of the CCP Central Committee from these provinces grew from 17 in the outgoing 15th Central Committee to 24 in the 16th Central Committee as constituted in November 2002.

Sichuan which was previously represented with four members, now has five (two full members and 3 alternate members), Yunnan passed from four to five (two full members and three alternate members), Gansu from two to five (two full members and three alternate members), Qinghai from three to four (two full members and two alternate members), and the TAR from four to five (three full members and two alternate members).

	15th Central Committee		16th Central Committee	
			Full members	Alternate members
TAR	4	5	2	3
Sichuan	4	5	2	3
Qinghai	3	4	2	2
Gansu	2	5	2	3
Yunnan	4	5	2	3
total	17	24	10	14

The clearest link between the Tibetan regions and the new Party leader, Hu Jintao, is obviously that Hu was Party Secretary in the TAR between 1988 and 1993, but he had also occupied the same post in Gansu province in the past. It might be remarkable that Hu chose to remain deputy for the TAR in the National People's Congress, while in his new position he could have selected to represent more prestigious regions in the East. It is even more important, however, that a number of new leaders who belong to Hu Jintao's personal network, who have like him occupied important posts in the TAR and other provinces with Tibetan population, have been nominated to key posts after the 16th CCP Congress.

Zhang Xuesong, for instance, was secretary at the general office of the Gansu Provincial Party Committee while Hu Jintao was the secretary of the same committee. He was then nominated deputy secretary of the TAR Party Committee in 1990, a position in which he acted as one of Hu's main partners. Zhang was promoted to Party leader in Sichuan.⁴ Another example is that of Tian Conming who was also briefly deputy secretary of the TAR Party Committee during Hu Jintao's tenure. Tian has been nominated as head of the official Chinese News Agency Xinhua.

TIN sources identified outgoing Prime Minister Zhu Rongji's role in the re-establishment of the contact with the Dalai Lama. However, allies of Hu Jintao, even before the Party Congress, sidelined many of Zhu's allies. One remaining, though, is the member of the Standing Committee of the Politburo, Wen Jiabao. In March 2003, Wen took up the post of Prime Minister of the PRC from his mentor and predecessor Zhu Rongji. Wen has also been a close follower of party reformers Hu Yaobang and Zhao Ziyang, (the former was mainly responsible for the reform policies in Tibet in the 1980s). Wen spent many years in Gansu.

According to the Chinese official news agency Xinhua, the agenda of the first Politburo meeting that Hu chaired after the 16th Party Congress was the economic development of China's western region.

Whereas Chinese central leaders of the past had scant knowledge and little experience of Tibet and Tibetan regions, the new generation has more direct experience. Although only speculations could be made about which policies the new leadership might implement, the experience of the new leadership could mean that Tibet will receive more attention than in the past.

⁴ In early 2003, Zhang's predecessor, Zhou Yongkang was promoted to Minister of Public Security in Beijing as a replacement for the Tibetan, Dorje Tsering. According to an article in the Wall Street Journal of 13 March 2003, referring to diplomatic sources, Zhou had taken a keen interest in the arrest of the Tibetan Lama Tenzin Deleq Rinpoche in Spring 2002. The same source mentions that the execution of Tenzin Deleq Rinpoche's aide, Lobsang Dondrup, received the approval of the police ministry. Zhou Yongkang is a protégé of Zeng Qinghong, the strongest among five of the nine members of the Standing Committee of the Politburo considered to be loyal to outgoing Party leader Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao's potential rival.

DOCUMENT

Talk about the programme of action on nationality affairs during the elementary stage of socialism

by Hao shi yuan

The following article explains the theoretical Marxist background to the intimate relationship existing between economic development, the 'consolidation of the political system' and the resolving of 'minority issues'. It was published in the August issue of the journal 'Ethno-National Studies'. The original text has been shortened and partially summarised for translation.

In 1999, when we were about to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of our country, the Central Nationality Work Forum was convened. Comrade Jiang Zemin addressed the forum, delivering a speech in which he pointed out that: "The whole Party must regard the strengthening of the solidarity of the nationalities, the promotion of the joint development and progress of the nationalities as the 'Programme of Action' for dealing with the nationality issue during the whole elementary stage of socialism." This 'Programme of Action' not only pointed out the direction for a healthy process in solving our nationality affairs, but also provided an important ideological guarantee for constructing socialism with Chinese characteristics and for accomplishing the third step of strategic task during the elementary stage of socialism.

Since the 90s, because of the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the huge change in Eastern Europe, the nationality issue has caused social upheaval, speeded up the development of politics, created nationality conflict and lead to the fission of states, so that people all over the world are paying great attention to this central issue. At a time when the old century is changing into the new century, the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation, (NATO,) headed by America, has suddenly tried to form a "one-sided pole" and interfered in Yugoslavia's internal nationality affairs and invaded by force. Such actions created a shadow over the hopes of mankind entering the new century.

Marxism holds that nationality is an aspect of the general social issue, and cannot be solved alone (...). To a Party of the proletarian class, which has achieved political power, the general social issue is about how to construct socialism. The facts prove that the main reason for the failure of socialism in the former Soviet Union is that they were not able to solve adequately the basic problem of how to construct socialism.

The nationality issue in China was resolved because the Chinese Communist Party persisted in combining Marxist nationality theory with the reality of China's various nationalities (...). However, our successes are the achievements of only a certain period of the elementary stage of socialism. Therefore, from the point of view of the whole elementary stage of socialism, we still face a heavy task in solving nationality issues.

(...)

Developing the economy, strengthening the country and improving the living standards of people of various nationalities is the basic guarantee of consolidating, developing and perfecting China's socialist political system.

The basic political strategy of China in solving nationality problems is regional national autonomy (...). Without doubt, we should also know that our country's regional national autonomy system is not yet absolutely perfect, and we should continually develop it as part of the process of constructing socialism with Chinese characteristics (...). We should understand the problems of regional national autonomy from the point of view of the characteristics of the elementary stage of socialism, we should look into the causes from the restricted elements of a weak economic base, but we should never take any extreme transcending view of social development and change the regional national autonomy into local autonomy, or dilute it as a result of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe's failure to solve their nationality problems.

Those who think that regional national autonomy does not have much power and benefit are wrong (...). Comrade Jiang Zemin emphasised that: "We must constantly assure the relations of safeguarding the country and promoting regional autonomy. The state guarantees the autonomous rights of regional national autonomy in accordance with the law, and regional national autonomy wholly implements the general policy of the Party and the state, and creatively carries out their work by combining with the reality of conditions in the region."

Solving nationality issues requires the guarantee of the political system, and the political system needs the support of the economic base.

Zhu Rong Ji requested that the development of the west and the speeding up of the development of the minority nationality areas must be an important guiding principle of the state's '10th Five Year Plan' and Long Term Plan.

Practice has proved that opening up is the prerequisite for promoting and developing. To develop the minority nationalities and their areas, we must continually deepen reform and widen opening up in the process of building the socialist market economy.

We must thoroughly understand the protracted nature and complicated nature, and the importance of, the social nationality issue, and the fact of its common and international characteristics that appeared alongside the transformation of the international situation.

Putting into effect the 'Programme in Action' of nationality issues during the elementary stage of socialism with the big development of the west and the speeding up of minority nationality areas as its core not only provides an arduous task for nationality research work, it also simultaneously provides an opportunity to develop and to prosper (...). During the whole stage of the elementary socialism, the main objective of our country's nationality issue is to speed up the social economic development of the minority nationalities and their areas.

Source: Ethno-National Studies, August 2002

DOCUMENT

Extract from the 'TAR Regulations Regarding the Management of the Border Areas' Promulgated by the Standing Committee of TAR Congress

Chapter 1. General Principles

Article 1. To strengthen the management of the border areas, to safeguard the sovereign rights and the territorial integrity of the country, to promote the opening up and reform of the border areas, and to reinforce friendship with the bordering countries, in accordance with the laws and regulations of the country and the reality of Tibet, we have laid down these Regulations.

Article 2. So called border areas in this article are those determined counties and administrative areas in the frontier of our country.

Article 4. It is the responsibility of the Public Security Departments to implement these Regulations, and the Frontier Army, Foreign Affairs Department, the People's Liberation Army must coordinate well to manage the border areas.

Article 6. Those units and individuals who achieve outstanding successes in border management work shall receive commendations and rewards from each level of the People's Government.

Article 9. Transnational facilities of transportation, communication, water conservancy, and electric power and so on can only constructed after being agreed by the TAR Government and being approved by competent departments of the state, and must also be constructed and managed in accordance with the Agreement signed by our country with neighbouring countries.

Chapter 3. Management of the Border Areas

Article 11. Those who cross the border line to come into or go out of our country must obtain the following effective certificates, and accept the checks and the management of the Public Security Departments:

- 1) Chinese citizens above 16 years old who live in the border areas must obtain the certificates of 'Citizen identification card of the People's Republic of China' and 'Border resident identification card of TAR';*

- 2) Chinese citizens above 16 years old who are non-border residents entering the border areas must obtain 'Border pass of PRC's Border Management Areas', and 'PRC's citizen identification card';
- 3) Those Chinese citizens who live in the border areas but are below the age of 16 must obtain effective certifications from the above local township authorities, and non-border residents who are below the age 16 must obtain effective certifications from the local Public Security Departments which are above county authority level;
- 4) Those overseas Chinese, Tibetan compatriots who live abroad, and compatriots who live in Hong Kong, Macao and in Taiwan travelling in non-open up border areas must obtain 'PRC Border Management Areas Pass' and their own effective certifications;
- 5) Foreigners and non nationality people travelling in border areas that have not been opened to foreigners must obtain 'PRC's foreigners travelling pass' issued by the Public Security Departments, and their own effective crossing border certificates;
- 6) Officials of the PLA and the Armed Public Security Army travelling in and out of the border areas must obtain 'PLA soldier travelling pass', 'Travelling Pass of the Armed Security Army of the Chinese People', and their own effective certificate; Officials and soldiers stationed in border areas can travel in the border areas with their own effective certificates. All those entering non- open border areas must accept the check up of the Frontier Army of PLA.

Article 12. Nobody is allowed to organise or transport people without certificates, non effective certificates, or unlawfully enter and exit the border areas.

Article 13. Any activities such as mapping, geological prospecting, archaeological engagements, taking photographs, making films, doing scientific research, demolitions, etc., must apply to the local competent departments in accordance with the relevant procedures to the local Public Security Army for examination, to governments which are above county level for approval and only then can they carry out their activities within the restricted time, scale and range.

Article 14. Establishing tourism and border trade in the border areas must be examined and approved in accordance with the relevant regulations of the state, and their activities can only be carried out within the approved restricted range. Border Public Security Departments, Customhouse, Industry and Commerce Departments and Tax bureau, etc., should manage in accordance with their duties.

Article 15. Our country's citizens who want to tour neighbouring countries must be approved by exit port's county level Public Security Department in according with the Bilateral Agreement, and can only leave the country after applying to and receiving from the Border Check Up Station effective certificates.

Chapter 4. The management of the bordering people's coming and leaving issue

Article 18. According to the Agreement with bordering countries, bilateral border areas people who have entered a neighbouring country with effective certificates for temporary visits can carry out the following activities within the restricted range of area:

- 1) Visit friends and relatives, or for medical treatment;
- 2) Engage in border trade;
- 3) Other normal people-to-people contact and folk activities.

Article 19. Our border residents visiting neighbouring countries must obtain a 'TAR Border Resident Certificate' and a 'Boundary Line Crossing Pass of the Border People of the Border Areas Management Committee of PRC and TAR' issued by Public Security Border Army.

Article 20. Those neighbouring border people who want to stay overnight must have their own effective border peoples' certificate and register at the Border Public Security Department. Units or individuals who wish to let these people stay overnight in one's house or in other places must apply to the Border Public Security Department, and only after being approved will they be allowed to stay overnight.

Article 21. Those neighbouring border people who have entered our country to settle must be persuaded by the local government to return back to their own country. If they cannot be persuaded, then the Border Public Security Department must force them to return back to their own country.

OFFICIAL NEWS COVERAGE AND OTHER SOURCES**29 December 2001**

China's Defence Minister Chi Haotian has called on military units in the western provinces (including Yunnan and Sichuan) to help develop the region. He stressed that national defence construction should be carried out along with economic development, including the manufacture of products for both peacetime and wartime. Chi Haotian emphasised the importance of safeguarding frontier defence, maintaining social stability, and making full preparations for a possible military struggle.

Xinhua news agency domestic service, Beijing

31 December 2001

China has published a new set of regulations for the administration of the publishing industry. The regulations state that while serving the people, socialism and the publishing cause, with Marxism-Leninism, Mao Zedong thought and Deng Xiaoping theory as guidance, accumulated science, technology, cultural knowledge must be spread. No publication should have contents related to cult and superstition or contain materials suspected of disturbing the social order or destroying social stability.

Xinhua / China Topnews

2 January 2002

China is building a "Digital Tibet" Internet network to break the monopoly of the dissemination of Tibet information by foreign countries that present a "distorted" and "separatist" perspective. Increasing numbers of web sites about Tibet have emerged in China in recent years and central and local government will invest significantly in information facilities in the region. Already, optical fibre cables have been laid from Lhasa to Xigaze, Nyingchi, Qamdo and other areas. All the towns of the region will be connected by telephone before 2005.

Xinhua news agency

7 January 2002

Senior Chinese leader Li Ruihuan has said that China is committed to its policy of freedom of conscience and respects and protects the legitimate rights of religious believers. He said the principle of religious independence must be constantly upheld and efforts should be made to prevent infiltration using religion as a cover

People's Daily

8 January 2002

Replying to questions from reporters on 8 January, the Dalai Lama said the Tibetan people could accept genuine autonomy, leaving issues of defence and foreign ministries to China. He suggested that spiritual and religious leaders of all faiths should sit together and work for developing human value among the people by preaching non-violence.

PTI news agency, New Delhi

8 January 2002

Chinese Vice-Premier Li Lanqing has called for improved radio and TV coverage in the country's remote western regions in order to promote economic development, social stability and ethnic harmony in the border regions. He also urged those involved in radio and TV to improve the quality of their programmes, with stress on higher moral, artistic and entertainment values.

Xinhua news agency

8 January 2002

Li Lanqing, member of the Political Bureau of the CCP (Chinese Communist Party) Central Committee and vice-premier of the State Council has praised the media for delivering "voice of the party" to all in China's west. He emphasised the need to adopt further measures to effectively enhance coverage of radio and television broadcast in the western provinces and regions in order to guarantee that the voice of the party and the state will be delivered to every family. Li Lanqing called for the implementation of new technologies (including the transmission of radio and television programmes over the internet, and highlighted the significance of this area in terms of economic development, social stability, ethnic unity in the border areas and to attain long-lasting stability and order in China.

Xinhua news agency

9 January 2002

On 9 January the question that it had no plans to raise the Tibet issue and the China announced that the Karmapa Lama during the upcoming visit of Premier Zhu Rongji to India, because it is not a bilateral problem between China and India. The Indian government has previously made it very clear that they will not allow the Karmapa to be used by any foreign powers against China.

PTI news agency, New Delhi

13 January 2002

China's border security guards have been ordered to step up their vigilance to prevent "hostile forces" either getting in or out of the country, state media reported today. Threats that could pour across the borders are from sources as diverse as terrorists, separatists and the outlawed Falun Gong movement. China considers ethnic Uighur Muslim separatists as "terrorists" and critics say it has used the global war on terror as an excuse to crack down more harshly against groups advocating an independent state of East Turkestan for the Uighurs.

AFP / The Age

23 January 2002

China is moving 17,000 mostly Han Chinese and Muslim settlers to Qinghai province, a traditionally Tibetan region, reviving a plan abandoned by the World Bank after protests by critics of China's Tibetan policies. The World Bank got involved in the Dulan project in the late 1990s, and agreed to lend China \$40 million to cover half the cost. Tibetan activists condemned the plan, contending it would dilute Qinghai's Tibetan character and ravage the local environment

by increasing demands for water and farmland. While the original plan was to relocate 60,000 people, the new plan is to move smaller groups in stages. The first settlers are to occupy a former labour camp in Dulan county.

Associated Press / Yahoo

24 January 2002

China is aiming to provide basic medical service to 900 million residents in vast rural areas. The network, based on state-funded medical centres in rural towns and villages, will also be composed of private hospitals and clinics with trained staff and standard services. More farmers will be able to afford medical services if they join a pool system, known as "cooperative medical care".

China Topnews

24 January 2002

China has launched its largest website on human rights with a zero-tolerance vow to smash Muslim separatists. The English-language site was set up with a promise to present the nation's human rights situation "comprehensively and objectively." However, the site is not a self-examining review of China's record on human rights. Articles about Falun Gong are featured, as well as articles about the Chinese government view on human rights in Tibet, which denounces the Dalai Lama "clique". Amnesty International officials were not impressed by the website, especially with regard to the death sentence statistics. The true figures remain a state secret in China. Many cases are reported in which death sentences were passed on the basis of contentious evidence, including confessions extracted under torture.

Wired.com

28 January 2002

China will issue 300 million yuan-worth of government loans to support the development of vocational and continuing education in China's western areas. The loans will be used to improve education in 186 poverty-stricken counties in the Xinjiang and Tibet autonomous regions. Despite significant progress in vocational and adult education in western China over the past few years, rural residents still enjoy fewer educational opportunities compared with people living in the developed coastal areas of east China.

China Daily

1 February 2002

On 1 February, President Jiang Zemin stressed on Friday that increasing television and radio broadcasting coverage in the Tibet Autonomous Region would help promote economic development and maintain social stability. Jiang stated that local residents, especial ethnic minority groups, welcomed projects of television and radio broadcasting network expansion.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

1 February 2002

On 1 February, officials from the local authorities of the Tibet Autonomous Region visited repatriated Tibetans. Over 2,000 Tibetans have returned from abroad in recent years to visit relatives or to stay permanently. Many of the returnees are senior citizens without children, and who endured difficulties in making a living overseas. In the TAR the disadvantaged can claim government benefits.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

6 February 2002

China has urged Tibetans living in exile to return and offered general amnesty for their earlier support to the Dalai Lama's campaign for the independence of Tibet. It has been stated that anyone who no longer promotes or believes in the "independence of Tibet" would be welcome even though they may have previously engaged in separatist activities. China has also issued a fresh call to the Dalai Lama to renounce his struggle for Tibet's independence and return home.

PTI news agency, New Delhi

7 February 2002

The General History of Tibetan Nationality has been published in Lhasa by the Tibetan People's Publishing House. Written by a Qinghai-born Tibetologist between 1991 and 1998 with more than 1.3 million Chinese characters, it is the country's first Chinese version of general history of the Tibetan ethnic group.

Tibetinfo.com

7 February 2002

The State Administration of Radio, Film and Television has donated 4,000 sets of radios to farmers and herdsmen in Tibetan to let them keep abreast of current affairs and useful knowledge while enjoying entertainment items.

Tibetinfo.com

10 February 2002

Human Rights bimonthly, China's first professional magazine on human rights issues, has been launched, published as Chinese and English versions by the China Society for Human Rights Studies (CSHRS). The magazine aims to open an access for the international community to understand China's human rights conditions by narrating stories, discussing theories and initiating dialogues about human rights issues.

Xinhua.net

5 March 2002

China's Vice President Hu Jintao has called for accelerated development in Tibet. He said that that economic development, promoting reforms and improving the people's living standard are of vital importance for Tibet, in order to strengthen the unity of various ethnic groups, maintain social stability, reinforce border defence and safeguard the unification of the motherland.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

11 March 2002

According to Legqog, chairman of the Tibet Autonomous Region government, the Tibetan people "now know the separatist nature of the Dalai Lama's clique inside out." He added that the Dalai Lama has already lost popularity in Tibet and has become an obedient tool manipulated by anti-China forces outside China. The regional government will never relax its fight against separatism, said Legqog.

China Daily

31 March 2002

China's party paper Renmin Ribao has reported that some members of the European Parliament (MEPs) lacked a true understanding of Tibet because of the "negative publicity of the Dalai clique". However, the recent visit to Belgium by a Tibetan People's Congress delegation enabled MEPs to get to know the "real Tibet".

Renmin Ribao web site, Beijing

21 May 2002

The Australian government reiterated its one-China policy on 21 May, saying there is no need for Prime Minister John Howard to meet the Dalai Lama during his visit to Australia. Australia recognises both Tibet and Taiwan as provinces of China.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

21 May 2002

The chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference, Li Ruihuan, has expressed China's appreciation over Slovenia's persistent adherence to the one-China policy, during a meeting with Slovenian Foreign Minister Dimitrij Rupel.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

22 May 2002

Residents from two-thirds of the villages in the Tibet Autonomous Region, have elected the village leaders and deputies who will represent them in the township people's congress. Many of the voters had to travel miles on horseback and all have shared the common desire to cast their own vote. The village committee elections are expected to be completed in all Tibetan villages by the end of the year.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

24 May 2002

Chinese President Jiang Zemin has called for greater efforts to deepen reform, expand the opening to the outside world and find a new road of development for the western provinces. He said that the key to resolving all the problems encountered in the development of the western region is to speed up development.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

12 June 2002

China will train and recruit more skilled people for the country's western region to support development in the area, according to its 2002-2005 programme for training and recruitment for government, businesses and research institutions issued on 12 June. Through preferential salary and taxation policies, the programme will attract skilled people with higher education who are urgently needed for major projects in west China such as infrastructure construction, environmental protection, and the development of resources and high-tech industries.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

2 July 2002

The older brother of the Dalai Lama, Gyalo Thondup, is due to arrive in Tibet on 3 July, his first visit in fifty years. Mr Thondup, hoping for frank talks with the Chinese and Tibetan authorities about China's often heavy-handed treatment of the Himalayan territory, has recently been in Hong Kong attending talks through a Tibetan liaison officer.

South China Morning Post (Business Post supplement), Hong Kong

12 July 2002

Raidi, Chairman of the Standing Committee of the Tibet Autonomous Regional People's Congress, told European parliament delegates visiting the Tibet Autonomous Region, that tourism is Tibet's core industry. However, its great potential had not yet been fully tapped, and he pledged to make more effort in this direction.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

18 July 2002

Beijing's first legislation on religions means that it will no longer be illegal for its citizens to engage in Eight-Diagram divining, fortune-telling, physiognomy, praying and drawing fortune-sticks, prediction by Chinese characters, exorcism and such other activities in religious premises. Citizens are also permitted to engage in business dealing in religious objects of art and publications outside religious premises, to set up religious institutes and schools. Since heretical cults are not defined as religions, they are not protected by the ordinance.

Zhongguo Xinwen She news agency, Beijing

20 July 2002

During an inspection tour of Yunnan Province, Chinese Vice-President Hu Jintao has urged the province to make the most of China's strategy to speed up western development by accelerating key infrastructure construction. He urged local officials to strive to raise farmers' incomes while easing their economic burden.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

24 July 2002

The governments of the three provinces of Sichuan, Yunnan and the Tibet Autonomous Region have signed a joint agreement pinpointing the site of the legendary Shangri-La, which will be turned into a world-class tourist destination by the investment of 80bn yuan

(9.64bn US dollars) during the next eight years. The location of the original Shangri-La in the area where the three regions converge has long provoked heated arguments in Sichuan, Yunnan and Tibet. Xinhua news agency, Beijing

24 July 2002

Zhang Yishan, the deputy Chinese permanent representative to the United Nations has called for exchanges and cooperation in the field of human rights, voicing its hope that all countries will, through dialogue and exchanges on an equal footing, properly handle divergent views on the human rights issues.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

25 July 2002

Speaking about his current visit to Tibet, Ma Canrong, China's ambassador to Germany, claimed to have personally witnessed Tibet's enormous achievements in all areas and he saw for himself a brand new Tibet with a stable state of affairs, with its economy developing, with its people united, and full of vigour and vitality. He suggested, "We should introduce Tibet to the outside world more often, thus allowing even more people to understand the true Tibet."

Xinhua news agency domestic service, Beijing

31 July 2002

Chinese Premier Zhu Rongji met with Bainqen Erdini Qoigiyabu, the [Beijing-approved] 11th Panchen Lama in Beijing, on 31 July. During his recent tour of Tibet, the Panchen Lama attended a series of Buddhist activities marking his 13th birthday. He told Premier Zhu Rongji that he would learn from the 10th Panchen Lama's glorious past and would, in accordance with Chairman Jiang Zemin's requirements, "love both the country and the religion" and "protect the country and benefit the people."

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

8 August 2002

In an interview with foreign media units, Guo Jinlong, secretary of the Tibet autonomous regional party committee, stated that over 95 per cent of the population in Tibet are ethnic Tibetans and Tibetan cadres account for more than 75 per cent of the total number of cadres. He said emphatically that the Chinese government never has a so-called plan to migrate people to Tibet.

Xinhua news agency for Hong Kong, Beijing

8 August 2002

Puqung, executive vice-chairman of the Tibet Autonomous Regional People's Congress, met on 8 August with the assistant group of the International Relations Committee of the US House of Representatives currently visiting Lhasa and briefed them on the situation with regard to the use of the Tibetan language. The National People's Congress, through legislation, has passed a law to safeguard the Tibetan language. Currently, 87 per cent of Tibetan children of school age are attending schools, where they are receiving a good education in the Tibetan language.

Xinhua news agency for Hong Kong, Beijing

8 August 2002

Tibetans will become a minority in their own capital in the next few years as Han Chinese migrants pour into the city to take part in a new drive to develop Tibet's economy, a senior local official said yesterday. But the influx of investment and skilled labour to Lhasa will bring unprecedented prosperity and stability to the region, said Jin Shixun, deputy director-general of Tibet's Development and Planning Commission. It was one of the boldest admissions yet by a mainland official on the sensitive issue of Han migration to Tibet, a policy that critics say Beijing is encouraging to swamp Tibetan culture. "At the moment the population here in Lhasa stands at around 200,000 – about half of them are the migrant population," he said.

SCMP

9 August 2002

Gyalo Thondup, the elder brother of the Dalai Lama has met with top Tibetan officials during his first visit to Tibet in half a century. He had talks with leading officials of the Tibet Autonomous Region in which they exchanged views on their impressions on the changes in Tibet.

Times of India

12 August 2002

The older brother of the Dalai Lama is calling for face-to-face talks between the exiled Tibetan spiritual leader and mainland officials. Gyalo Thondup, who has just visited Tibet for the first time in 54 years, stated, "I am urging the Chinese authorities as well as the Tibetans. We must [meet] face to face to discuss this problem with the Chinese, not shouting at each other's backs."

Radio TV Hong Kong (RTHK) Radio 3 audio web site, Hong Kong

14 August 2002

Tibet wishes to promote cooperation with India in the economic field and in border trade, said Luosang Toinzhub, vice-chairman of the Tibet Autonomous Regional People's Government during a meeting with Nalin Surie, joint secretary of the Indian Foreign Ministry.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

10 September 2002

A Tibetan delegation participating in the ongoing China's Tibetan Culture Week in Brussels has paid a visit to European Parliament and held a cordial and frank discussion with some Parliament members on Tibet issues. British MEP (member of European Parliament) Inglewood said that he believed the culture week, designed to present a wide variety of programmes depicting the social and religious developments in Tibet, would contribute to the spreading of Tibetan culture and to the improvement of the knowledge of the current development of the Tibetan society.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

16 September 2002

The Chinese central government will spend over 90bn yuan (approx. 10.8bn US dollars) in Tibet during the country's 10th five-year plan period (2001-2005), according to Legqog, Chairman of the Tibet

Autonomous Region. He further noted that the central government has offered a special policy to Tibet: the government will approve any project benefiting the Tibetan people.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

17 September 2002

China has appealed to the exiled Tibetan spiritual leader, the Dalai Lama, to renounce his quest for "independence" of the Himalayan region. Ye Xiaowen, Director of the state Administration of Religious Affairs, told reporters: "We continue to hope that the Dalai Lama will stop activities to split Tibet from the motherland during the remaining days of his life." His comments came amid reports of a meeting between Legqog, Chairman of the Tibet regional government, and an envoy of the Dalai Lama, Lodi Gyaltzen Gyari in Lhasa.

PTI news agency, New Delhi

18 September 2002

Overseas-based dissident groups have been bombarded with Internet virus and hacking attacks from mainland sources in what they say is a coordinated attempt to disrupt their operations and spy on their computer networks. The targeted groups are the same ones whose Web sites this month became inaccessible to mainland users through the Google search engine, including Tibet support groups, Falun Gong Web sites and Xinjiang independence activists. The scale of the attacks goes far beyond what has been experienced before, making it unlikely that it is the work of amateur Chinese hackers. Some of the attacks have been traced to China Telecom regional offices in several provinces and it has been suggested that the attacks are part of a wider campaign to crack down on what Beijing views as subversive activity.

South China Morning Post (Business Post supplement), Hong Kong

18 September 2002

The Buddhist Association of China passed a resolution urging the Chinese Buddhist circles to continue condemning the evil Falun Gong cult. The resolution sharply denounces the cult's leader Li Hongzhi for immorally and illogically stealing many key Buddhist terms for his heresy, such as the term "Falun," meaning the continuously turning wheel of transmigration. The resolution also expresses the hope that Buddhists across the world will work together to prevent Buddhism from being blemished by the "completely evil" cult that aims to subvert social stability.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

8 October 2002

China has expressed strong displeasure at and resolute opposition to an annual report on religion issued by the Department of State of the United States. Commenting on the International Religious Freedom Report 2002, a Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson claimed the report "trampled the basic norms of international relations and rudely interfered in China's internal affairs."

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

1 November 2002

China is warning Japan not to allow the Dalai Lama to stop over in Japan before proceeding on a visit to Mongolia from 4 November. Japan is again expected to give the go-ahead to the stopover as it had allowed him nine times before to enter the country on condition he does not get involved in political activity.

Kyodo News Service, Tokyo

4 November 2002

Beijing has denounced the Dalai Lama's visit to Mongolia, which is due to begin today. The Foreign Ministry said the Dalai Lama was not simply a religious figure but was a political exile who had engaged in activities to split the motherland. A previous attempt to visit Mongolia was cancelled last year when Russia refused to give him a transit visa.

RTHK Radio 3 audio web site, Hong Kong

7 November 2002

In an effort to improve the professional skills of Tibetan officials, eight prestigious universities across China are to enrol a total of 120 university postgraduates per year for the next five years. All applicants must be university graduates who have worked in a government department or institution for at least three years, and must agree to return to Tibet after graduation.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

12 November 2002

November 02 During a press conference given by the 16th CPC National Congress, Raidi, chairman of the Standing Committee of the Tibet Autonomous Region People's Congress, stated during the past 13 years, Tibet has experienced the most rapid development in the whole of its history. He said that Tibet's economy has been growing at a rate of over 11 per cent, which is above the average growth rate of the entire country, herdsman now ride motorcycles to herd their animals, and according to 2001 statistics, Tibet's utilisation rate of cell phones was the highest in the entire country.

Zhongguo Xinwen She news agency, Beijing

12 November 2002

Raidi, chairman of the Standing Committee of the Tibet Autonomous Region People's Congress has refuted the allegation made unilaterally by the Dalai Lama that the 11th Panchen Lama is held in captivity. The Dalai Lama's announcement in 1995 that the so-called "reincarnated soul boy of the Panchen Lama" had been identified, was both illegal and invalid. Raidi added that Gedun Choekya Nyima, the Dalai Lama's "invalid" identification of the reincarnated Panchen Lama, is "doing very well in school and his parents are very pleased. Their life is a very happy one."

Zhongguo Xinwen She news agency, Beijing

20 November 2002

Tibet's government-in-exile has urged the new Chinese leadership to start talks on the region's political future, hinting there may be an uprising if no progress is made by June. Samdhong Rinpoche, 63,

prime minister of the exiled government told an audience at the Foreign Press Association in London that he was optimistic about the prospect for negotiations after Hu Jintao became the new head of the Communist Party last week. He also hinted that if efforts for talks with Beijing on autonomy within the control of China elicited no response, there might be a popular uprising, saying that "the patience of a nation has limitations" and that they "could not wait for an unlimited time". Kesarng Takla, of the office of the Tibetan exile administration in London, said there had been consistent calls for people in Tibet not to resort to violence, but that the situation could spin out of control if Beijing did not start talks.

21 November 2002

Chen Zishang, Professor at Beijing University and director of the executive council of the China Human Rights Research Institute, has

stated that China now has the conditions to shift the focus of its promotion of human rights from the right to survival to the right to development. He claimed that the quality of human rights enjoyed by the Chinese people will definitely continue to rise.

Zhongguo Xinwen She news agency, Beijing

24 December 2002

The first map in China with provincial boundaries having a legally binding force was completed on 24 December, marking a success in internal boundary demarcation. The Administrative Map of the People's Republic of China was jointly made by the Ministry of Civil Affairs and the State Bureau of Surveying and Mapping on a scale of 1/4,000,000 and will be published by the China Cartographic Publishing House.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

This picture showing the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama with Mao during their visit to China in 1954 was long considered by the Chinese authorities as a 'patriotic picture'. Tibetans, however, for years saw it as a welcome opportunity to get around the ban on Dalai Lama pictures, (since the authorities saw in it simply a portrait of Mao,) and so displayed it. When they realised that the picture was not being displayed as a portrait of Mao, but as one of the Dalai Lama, the Chinese authorities ordered this picture to also be withdrawn from public circulation.





Nun reading prayers amid the rubble of her destroyed house.

©TIN

3 Religion

In 2002, the policies of the Chinese authorities towards Tibetan Buddhism remained unchanged. Although on a positive side, the venerated Buddhist lama Khenpo Jigme Phuntsog was able to return to his seat at the Serthar Buddhist Institute and resume his teaching activities after being removed in 2001 in the course of a crackdown against the institute, the general attitude of the authorities towards Tibetan religion remained one of suspicion and tight control. 'Patriotic education' and the implementation of a ban on pictures of the Dalai Lama remained in practice. In November 2002, long-life prayer ceremonies for the Dalai Lama were finally forcibly ended by PLA troops. Prior to this, they had been held in the region of Kardze in East Tibet and, for several months, apparently tolerated by the authorities. The Tibetans involved in these activities were arrested.

TIN NEWS STORY

TIN NEWS UPDATE, 25 JULY 2002 (EDITED)

Return of senior teacher Khenpo Jigme Phuntsog to Serthar Buddhist institute

TIN has received confirmation that Khenpo Jigme Phuntsog returned to the Serthar Buddhist Institute in Sichuan province earlier this summer. Jigme Phuntsog, the founder and senior teacher of the institute, was taken from Serthar in the valley of Larung Gar in Summer 2001 during a crackdown on the institute involving the expulsion of hundreds of nuns and monks and the demolition of many residences.¹ After this first wave of destruction, some further demolitions were reported to have taken place at the institute up to spring of this year. Khenpo Jigme

¹ See TIN's News Update 19 August 2001 "Expulsions of nuns and students", as well as TIN's Special Report 18 April 2002 "Religious work" for the new century"

Phuntsog's absence caused great anxiety and speculation among the remaining monks and nuns at Serthar as well as among his followers in and outside Tibet. While Khenpo Jigme Phuntsog was provided with medical treatment, his freedom of movement was restricted. His return to Serthar was celebrated for several days. The situation at the institute is reportedly still tense. So far the Khenpo has not given any teachings.

While the exact circumstances of the Khenpo's departure from Serthar remain unclear, TIN has received reports that he was first brought to a military hospital in Barkham (Chinese: Ma'erkang), the capital of Ngaba Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture and that he was subsequently transferred to Chengdu, the capital of Sichuan Province, for further medical treatment.² He reportedly suffered from knee problems as well as a nervous disorder and is partially blind. Although Khenpo Jigme Phuntsog does not seem to have been formally under house arrest, he was kept under close surveillance. The authorities reportedly insisted on him being treated by a doctor of their choice practising Western medicine, instead of a traditional Tibetan doctor. In Chengdu, Jigme Phuntsog lived with a few followers as well as some relatives. While the authorities did not allow foreigners or Tibetans living outside the People's Republic of China to meet him, students from Serthar were permitted to visit him, though few appear to have managed to do so due to the costs and difficulties involved in travelling to Chengdu. Moreover, the

Khenpo was able to have telephone contact with his followers in Serthar. He reportedly exhorted them not to worry, to study hard and to *"be good"*. Meanwhile, in Serthar itself, his senior followers continued giving the regular religious teachings and classes, although no ritual empowerments (Tib. *wang*) were given.³

Although many of his followers feared that Khenpo Jigme Phuntsog would not be allowed to go back to Serthar, speculation about his return and possible dates for his return started to circulate a few months ago. According to eyewitnesses, his arrival after one year of absence was celebrated with great enthusiasm. A welcoming ceremony was held at a pass just above Serthar, which was followed by six days of further celebrations at the institute. A source at Serthar said, *"Teachers and students enjoyed being able to be together with the Khenpo. Meanwhile, those monks and the nuns from the Larung Choekyi Grongkhyer [Serthar institute] and people from all around Serthar held a big ceremony performing singing and playing games."* The



Remains of destroyed homes at Serthar Buddhist Institute.

© TIN

² See TIN's News Update 08 November 2001 "Serthar teacher now in Chengdu"

³ In Tibetan Buddhism, ritual empowerments allow students to perform certain type of spiritual practice. It is known that in recent years Chinese Buddhists travelled from all parts of China to receive such ritual empowerments in Serthar.

Khenpo's health is said to have improved, although he has not fully recovered. There has not been an official announcement about his return to Serthar.

Reports from the area indicate that the situation at Serthar after the return of Khenpo Jigme Phuntsog is still strict. According to some sources local officials were told by the authorities of Kardze Tibet Autonomous Prefecture and of Serthar county itself that they were not allowed to attend the celebrations for the Khenpo's return. Notices warn visitors that they are not allowed to enter the monastery without permission from the authorities and that they are not allowed to bring cameras with them. A source reported that tourists have been detained and interrogated by the authorities of Serthar county, while their cameras were

confiscated. The local Public Security Bureau, which used to be located approximately three kilometres away from the institute, has recently been transferred to a building formerly used by Serthar's foreign students.⁴ A source from Serthar added that a message played through loud-speakers installed in the institute compound warns the monks and nuns not to gather in large groups and not to build new houses. *"It always plays whether the people are listening or not."* After his return, Khenpo Jigme Phuntsog publicly thanked his followers for their support, but did not give any speech or teaching. The same source said: *"The Rinpoche normally gives a speech during the summer festival every year, but this year there was nothing and so there were many people who said that they were unhappy."*

TESTIMONY

The following interview which TIN made with a monk from Serthar monastery in November 2002, gives a direct account of the situation at the Buddhist institute after the return of Khenpo Jigme Phuntsog. A remarkable point of the interview, is the allegation made by the interviewee that the Khenpo would have secretly fled Chengdu to return to Serthar.

Q: Does Khenpo Jigme Phuntsog teach scriptures in the monastery?

A: Yes, however, only 400 nuns are allowed to attend the scripture teaching. Previously more than 4800 nuns were attending his scripture teaching.

Q: Why did they target to destroy the nuns' houses in particular?

A: The government said that initially when the monastery was founded it had requested the county and district authorities for only 1000 monks and 400 nuns to stay there. Then eventually when thousands of nuns began to live there, they said that only 400 nuns were allowed to stay there.

Q: There was certainly a huge increase of nuns, but there was also a huge increase in monks. Then why do the restrictions particularly target the nuns?

A: In Serthar there is no monastery for the monks, it is only a kind of a school for them. After they finished their studies they go back to their home monasteries. The nuns, however, remain in the monastery even after their studies because they have a nunnery in the institute.

Q: Do you think that there is a possibility for the nuns to return to the monastery like before?

A: It is just our hope. Those nuns that have families to go back to went to their homes but some nuns do not have any homes to return. So they roam about and live everywhere.

Q: Are there many nuns that have nowhere to go and do you think that they have financial problems to eke out their livelihood?

A: They do have financial problems, but their biggest problem is that they are prevented from living in Serthar.

Q: What about Ani Muntso, the Khenpo's niece and head of the nuns?

A: She is not allowed to go anywhere without the permission of the Chinese government. She got to stay in Serthar.

Q31: Do they treat Ani Muntso in the same way as they do treat Khenpo Jigme?

A: Yes they are treated the same. The Chinese are particularly more focused on Khenpo Jigme and she comes after Khenpo Jigme. However, China gives more attention to Khenpo because in 1990 he had come to India and met with His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

Q: Do you think that the fact that Khenpo Jigme Phuntsog was allowed to return to Serthar is a sign of the Chinese showing him some respect?



Khenpo Jigme Phuntsog in the 1980s with the Panchen Lama. ©TIN

4. This building can be seen under No. 2 on the panorama of the Serthar institute provided on TIN's website + other photos

A: All Tibetans and all Chinese civil servants have respect for the Khenpo but the Chinese government say that they are not allowed to give respect to him. Regarding the Khenpo's return to Serthar, the Chinese government said that he wasn't allowed to leave Chengdu but the Khenpo fled from there. They learnt about his escape only after he had come to a distance of 70 kilometres. They said that it wasn't right of the Khenpo to leave Chengdu without any permission from the government. He was moving slowly because he isn't keeping well. Then the Tibet Autonomous Prefecture [of Kardze] telephoned Serthar Dzong to say that if any civil servant came to receive the Khenpo he would be expelled from his job and if any student came for the Khenpo's reception he would be expelled. Therefore no civil servant and no student could come for the Khenpo's reception.

Q32: Doesn't he go anywhere after he returned to Serthar?

A: He wants to go but the Chinese government doesn't allow him to move about. They don't give him a travel permit.

Q: There are now officials stationed in Serthar. Where and in which building are they stationed there?

A: The work team is in the monastery. Then, government officials stay at the place called 'International Religion School', it used to be the place where foreign students kept their money and luggage. Now foreigners are not allowed to come there. The Public Security Bureau (PSB) officials stay in a police house at Lora shang, it is the only road to go to the monastery. They built a small house there to fit in ten people. About ten police stay there, both Chinese and Tibetan. They don't stay permanently, they are stationed there in turn. They have a checkpoint and they don't allow anyone to pass through [without permission]. They normally don't allow any foreigners to come in. When they allow any foreigners to pass in, they take away their cameras. They are also watchful of the family members of these Serthar monks and nuns that come in there.

Q: (Looking at a picture shot in Serthar) When was this taken?

A: It was taken two months after the Chinese pulled down the houses. They have now cleared all the ruins and planted grass on the ground.

TIN NEWS STORY

TIN NEWS UPDATE, 6 AUGUST 2002 (EDITED)

Restrictions on travelling to Kailash: officials discouraged from going on pilgrimage

Restrictions were imposed on Tibetan government workers in Lhasa wishing to travel to Mount Kailash in western Tibet this year during the Buddhist festival of Sagadawa in May and June, the most auspicious period in 12 years to travel to the mountain. Mt Kailash in Ngari prefecture (Chinese: Ali) is regarded as a sacred site by both Buddhists and Hindus, and is promoted as a tourist destination by the Chinese authorities. According to reports received by TIN, Tibetan government workers in Lhasa were told by officials and by their neighbourhood committees that they would lose their pensions and possibly their jobs if they travelled to Mt Kailash during Sagadawa. General restrictions on visiting Mt Kailash have been in place in Tibet for several years, with most Tibetan pilgrims requiring a permit to allow them to circumbulate the mountain. The authorities sometimes close the Kailash region to both foreign tourists and Tibetan pilgrims, often without offering any explanation.



Mount Kailash and the Manasarovar lake.

©Zonda

Restrictions on Tibetan pilgrims going to Mt Kailash may have been enforced particularly stringently this year because it is regarded as an especially auspicious time to make a pilgrimage to Mt Kailash. This is because the festival of Sagadawa, which marks the enlightenment and death of the Buddha, and according to some Buddhist traditions his birth as well, has a special significance during the Year of the Horse (2002).⁵

Obtaining permits to visit Kailash can be a complex and lengthy bureaucratic process for Tibetans, especially for those without any connections within the relevant offices. A Tibetan truck driver from Ngari prefecture told TIN that pilgrims from his area first have to obtain confirmation of their address and a registration form from the local township administration, which then has to be taken to the county Public Security Bureau (PSB) for approval, and then to the regional PSB office. Final travel authorisation has to be obtained from the Ngari region military headquarters. Fees are payable at different stages of the process. Other Tibetans contacted by TIN reported similar procedures. Despite these bureaucratic and other obstacles, at least 10,000 pilgrims reportedly visited Mt Kailash during Sagadawa this year – with many of them travelling from Kham and Amdo (regions of eastern Tibet now largely incorporated into Qinghai and Sichuan) rather than central Tibetan areas.

A Western tourist who visited Mt Kailash during the Sagadawa festival said that while there did not appear to be many uniformed security personnel present, the authorities did appear to keep an eye on her group and to make sure they did not leave the designated pilgrims' route. The tourist said: *"On the day of our arrival we walked up a hill towards some prayer-flags. When we stopped to catch our breath, a uniformed man, who had been walking behind us quite casually, told us that we couldn't go any further as the area beyond the ridge was restricted. He wouldn't say why. He spoke good English and was very friendly."*



Sagadawa festival 2002 at Darchen, Kailash.

©Zonda

The Chinese authorities have focused on Mt Kailash as a prime tourist destination this year. On 31 December 2001 Xinhua reported: *"Ngari prefecture is to host a year of tourism in 2002 when tens of thousands of pilgrims come to worship the holy mountain and sacred lake [Manasarovar] in the region. (...) The authorities in the prefecture have decided to better serve the pilgrims by offering special transport in between the prefecture capital and the mountain and the lake and by providing better accommodation and food services along the pilgrimage route."* The Ngari authorities have also constructed a large Chinese-style gate at the approach to Mt Kailash.

However, the restrictions on tourists and pilgrims documented by TIN over the past two years indicate that promotion of the sacred mountain as a tourist attraction is likely to remain subject to the authorities' concerns regarding security in the region. The Chinese authorities have repeatedly emphasised the importance of "managing" tourism in this area. The Kailash region, which is close to sensitive border areas and which lies along one of the main escape routes for Tibetans travelling to Nepal, has been closed to both pilgrims and western tourists at various times in the past two years. One western tour group that had planned to visit Kailash in June 2001 was informed by its Nepalese travel agency that the Kailash area had been closed to tourists for *"internal, political reasons"*. On that occasion the closure is believed to have been linked to the authorities' concerns regarding a planned Tibetan Youth Congress (TYC) peace march from India to Tibet.⁶ The march was stopped by the Indian authorities before reaching the Indo-Tibetan border region. In September 2001 the area was closed once more, which may have been due to the movement of troops in the region. Soon after the terrorist attacks in the United States on 11 September 2001, tourists reported seeing large convoys of troops, tanks and anti-aircraft guns moving from Lhasa and Shigatse towards the border areas of the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR).



Chinese soldiers at the Sagadawa festival 2002.

©Zonda

⁵ According to Tibetan Buddhism the circumambulation around Mount Kailash and Lake Manasarovar in the year of the horse, especially during the Sagadawa festival, brings far greater merit than at any other time. Therefore the number of Tibetans visiting the mountain during Sagadawa was expected to be much larger than in previous years. The next Year of the Horse will be in 2014.

⁶ The Tibetan Youth Congress (TYC) is an exile Tibetan organisation based in Dharamsala.

TIN NEWS STORY

TIN NEWS UPDATE, 29 NOVEMBER 2002 (EDITED)

Obituary of Bomi Rinpoche

A senior Tibetan lama, Bomi Jampa Lodroe (Chinese: Bomi Qiangba Luozhu)⁷ died on Wednesday 20 November, according to a report released by Xinhua on 22 November. Bomi Rinpoche was highly revered for his exceptional erudition, his dedication to the education of a new generation of young monks in Tibet and his great humility. In 1995, he took the responsibility of conducting a ceremony staged by the Chinese government to select a reincarnation of the 10th Panchen Lama. Beijing had previously rejected the Dalai Lama's choice, Gedun Choekyi Nyima, whose location and circumstances have not been confirmed since. Bomi Rinpoche has subsequently been criticised for his perceived 'collaboration' with Chinese authorities.⁸ A "farewell ceremony" was held in the Jokhang, the central temple of Lhasa, on Wednesday 27 November and was attended by representatives of the Chinese central government and top Tibetan Autonomous Region (TAR) leaders.

Bomi Jampa Lodroe was born in 1918 in Dzayul (Chinese: Chayu) county, Nyingtri (Ch: Linzhi) prefecture, a part of Eastern Tibet currently falling within the Tibet Autonomous Region. According to a testimony he gave in November 1999 to *Fayin* (The Voice of Dharma), an official Chinese language journal on Buddhism, he was orphaned at a very early age, and cared for by his uncle's family. When he was eight years old, he entered a small local monastery near his home, after being recognised as the first reincarnation of a lama linked to that monastery. When he was 16, he moved to Ganden Monastery near Lhasa, the head monastery of the Gelugpa school of Tibetan Buddhism. In 1958, at the age of 42, he attained the *geshe lharampa* degree, the highest grade of erudition in the Gelugpa school.

In the Fayin testimony, Bomi Rinpoche describes his decision to stay in Tibet after the People's Liberation Army had crushed the uprising in Lhasa in 1959: *"It wasn't that my [political] consciousness was particularly high, but rather, I had been to India and knew it wasn't up to much, the climate was very different and hard for us [Tibetans] to adapt to".* Looking back, he says: *"I think that the step I took at that time was truly the correct one, and I am glad that I made this decision."*

What is known of his experiences in Tibet during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) perhaps undermines such sentiment. TIN has received reports that while he was at Ganden Monastery during the early years of the Cultural Revolution, Bomi Rinpoche was forced to lift on his back the remains of Tsongkhapa (1357-1419), the founder of the Gelugpa school. The Gelugpa school is one of the four main schools of Tibetan Buddhism. The three other schools are called Nyingmapa, Sakyapa and Kagyupa. All four schools include different sub-schools. A further

religious group, called Bonpo, is regarded as a reformed version of the pre-Buddhist Tibetan religion (Bon), though, in the course of the centuries, this group's teachings and practices have become very similar to those of the Buddhist schools. Since the 17th-18th century, the Gelugpa school has become the dominant religious group overall Tibet. Up to the 1950s, its leaders and main monasteries exerted a great influence over the traditional Tibetan State, and throw them onto a fire after a group of Red Guards had destroyed Tsongkhapa's tomb. However, he secretly managed to rescue Tsongkhapa's skull and collect a small urn of ashes, which he buried for safekeeping. The 10th Panchen Lama is said to have



Bomi Rinpoche was to assume several official posts during his life. He was appointed principal of the newly-founded Buddhist Academy in Lhasa in 1985 and Director of the Tibetan branch of the China Buddhist Association (CBA) in 1992, a post he held concurrently with the position of vice-chairman of the national CBA until his death. Also in 1992, he was appointed to the national Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC). It is less well known that during the 1980s, Bomi Rinpoche quietly ran an informal philosophy school in Nechung Monastery near Lhasa, using private funds. He is also known to have used his official contacts to help with the reconstruction of Ganden Monastery.

In 1988 he was asked, possibly by the 10th Panchen Lama, to assume the position of Ganden Chikyab, or general manager of Ganden monastery, Ganden is one of the three main Gelugpa monasteries situated around the Tibetan capital Lhasa, a position traditionally close to the Ganden Tripa, the head of the Gelugpa school and abbot

7 In Tibetan Bomi Rinpoche's name is spelt: *"brog mi byams pa blo gros"*; locally, he was affectionately called "Gen Bomi".

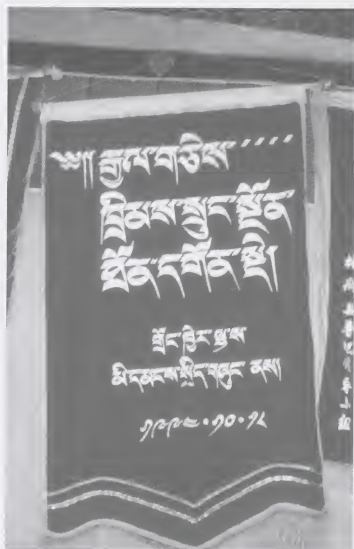
8 See "Reports from Tibet: April to December 1995", TIN

of Ganden. Later he was selected by the monks to be 'Acting Ganden Tripa'. However, this was not accepted by the Chinese authorities because of the implied recognition of the Ganden Tripas who have lived in exile in India since 1959.

Finally, while facing difficulties in finding a lama of suitably high rank to conduct the ceremony to formalise their recognition of the 11th Panchen Lama, the Chinese authorities confirmed Bomi Rinpoche's title of Acting Ganden Tripa, just one day before the controversial recognition ceremony took place on 29 November 1995. It appears Bomi Rinpoche was chosen by the Chinese authorities to conduct the selection ceremony because he was, both in age and erudition, the highest Gelugpa ecclesiastic left in Tibet. The Dalai Lama released a statement the day after the ceremony, claiming Bomi Rinpoche had been "coerced" into participating. Sources close to Bomi Rinpoche state that he regarded his participation in the ceremony as a duty he had to perform in order to continue the preservation of Buddhism in Tibet. He is also said to have hoped that the Chinese authorities

would acknowledge his gesture by appointing him as the child's tutor, so that he would be able to guide his studies in such manner as he saw fit. As it happened, Bomi Rinpoche's poor health and the government-selected Panchen Lama's long absences from Tibet meant that Bomi Rinpoche had very little contact with the child.

Despite Bomi Rinpoche's apparent collusion with the Chinese authorities during and after the controversial selection of the 11th Panchen Lama, many Tibetans both within and outside Tibet accept that he had little choice in the affair, and that he had conducted himself as well as he could under the circumstances. Furthermore, TIN is not aware of any instance of Bomi Rinpoche denouncing the Dalai Lama as a 'splittist' or the leader of a 'clique' – a political duty normally expected of religious leaders and practitioners in Tibet under 'patriotic education'. A source close to him said: "*Bomi Rinpoche was an extremely holy, highly learned and humble monk. He was convinced that if we did not compromise with the Chinese, soon nothing of what remains of Buddhism in Tibet would be left. His heart always remained with the Dalai Lama.*"



A banner given by the People's Government of Lhasa City to Reting monastery: "A patriotic, law-abiding and advanced monastery". © TIN

OFFICIAL NEWS COVERAGE AND OTHER SOURCES**7 January 2002**

Senior Chinese leader Li Ruihuan has said that China is committed to its policy of freedom of conscience and respects and protects the legitimate rights of religious believers. He said the principle of religious independence must be constantly upheld and efforts should be made to prevent infiltration using religion as a cover

People's Daily

8 January 2002

The Dalai Lama has reaffirmed his intention not to be reincarnated in Tibet or any other territory under Chinese rule. The Dalai Lama said if Tibet is not free when he dies, he will be reincarnated in some free country elsewhere.

Voice of America

9 February 2002

Li Ruihuan, member of the Political Bureau Standing Committee of the CCP (Chinese Communist Party) Central Committee and chairman of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) National Committee, cordially met with Bainqen Erdini Qoigyijabu (the Chinese selected 11th Panchen Lama) at the CPPCC National Committee Building on the afternoon of 9 February. Li Ruihuan expressed hope that the 11th Panchen would inherit and carry forward the fine traditions of the Tibetan Buddhism, work diligently and study assiduously to make greater contributions to the 'motherland'.

Xinhua news agency domestic service, Beijing

14 February 2002

A religious rights group in the United States has published a set of internal Chinese government documents describing in remarkable detail the suppression of unauthorised religious groups, including efforts to crush underground Catholic churches, use of secret agents to infiltrate illegal Protestant congregations and orders for "forceful measures" against the banned Falun Gong spiritual movement. China allows religious activity, including Christianity, but only within the framework of state-authorised churches. Catholics attend Mass freely in the Beijing cathedral, for instance, but the officially sanctioned church takes orders from the government, not the Vatican.

Washington Post

19 March 2002

Erdeni Losang Qamba Lhunzhub Qoigyijabu (the Chinese central government approved 11th Panchen) recently held a head-touching ritual in Beijing on Tuesday to bless Buddhists and urge them to love their motherland and uphold Buddhism.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

9 May 2002

China has strongly rejected a criticism by the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom in its recent annual report. According to Foreign Ministry spokesman Kong Quan, the attack on China's policies toward religion and minority groups and the Chinese government's lawful ban on the evil Falun Gong cult, were totally groundless, and an interference in China's internal affairs.

People's Daily

13 June 2002

The (Chinese approved) 11th Panchen Lama arrived in Lhasa Tuesday to a warm welcome from local lamas and Buddhist believers. The 11th Panchen ascended the throne in 1995 at the Zhaxi Lhunpo Lamastery after he was selected as the reincarnated Panchen Lama in accordance with the religious custom.

People's Daily

18 July 2002

Beijing's first legislation on religions means that it will no longer be illegal for its citizens to engage in Eight-Diagram divining, fortune-telling, physiognomy, praying and drawing fortune-sticks, prediction by Chinese characters, exorcism and such other activities in religious premises. Citizens are also permitted to engage in business dealing in religious objects of art and publications outside religious premises, to set up religious institutes and schools. Since heretical cults are not defined as religions, they are not protected by the ordinance.

Zhongguo Xinwen She news agency, Beijing

22 July 2002

The Chinese capital Beijing has issued a law, which will come into force on 1 November, to protect the practices and the legal rights of religious people and organisations.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing / SWB

31 July 2002

Chinese Premier Zhu Rongji met with Bainqen Erdini Qoigyijabu, the (Beijing-approved) 11th Panchen Lama in Beijing, on 31 July. During his recent tour of Tibet, the Panchen Lama attended a series of Buddhist activities marking his 13th birthday. He told Premier Zhu Rongji that he would learn from the 10th Panchen Lama's glorious past and would, in accordance with Chairman Jiang Zemin's requirements, "love both the country and the religion" and "protect the country and benefit the people."

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

6 August 2002

The Chinese government has funded restoration of the Grand Golden Tile Hall, the main hall of Gumbum (Kumbun) Lamastery in Qinghai Province. The 17th century structure had been eroded by wind, rain and insects and some of the walls were developing cracks. The building was reopened to the public on 6 August after several months of renovation.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

18 September 2002

The Buddhist Association of China passed a resolution urging the Chinese Buddhist circles to continue condemning the evil Falun Gong cult. The resolution sharply denounces the cult's leader Li Hongzhi for immorally and illogically stealing many key Buddhist terms for his heresy, such as the term "Falun," meaning the continuously turning wheel of transmigration. The resolution also expresses the hope that Buddhists across the world will work together to prevent Buddhism from being blemished by the "completely evil" cult that aims to subvert social stability.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

12 November 2002

Raidi, chairman of the Standing Committee of the Tibet Autonomous Region People's Congress has refuted the allegation made unilaterally by the Dalai Lama that the 11th Panchen Lama is held in captivity. The Dalai Lama's announcement in 1995 that the so-called "reincarnated soul boy of the Panchen Lama" had been identified, was both illegal and invalid. Raidi added that Gedun Choekya Nyima, the Dalai Lama's "invalid" identification of the reincarnated Panchen Lama, is "doing very well in school and his parents are very pleased. Their life is a very happy one."

Zhongguo Xinwen She news agency, Beijing



The 'Golden Yak' statue in Lhasa. Although it was designed to represent the 'new Tibet' in the style of the 'socialist realism', Tibetans in the capital consider the statue a symbol of their yearning for the Dalai Lama because one of the yak looks towards the Potala and the other the Norbu Lingka, the winter and summer palaces of the Tibetan leader. © TIN

4 Prisoners and Prisons

2002 has been a year marked by the release of many prominent Tibetan political refugees. This development, which started straight away in January with the release of the musicologist Ngawang Choephel, continued during the year and, along with the visit of envoys of the Dalai Lama to Tibet and China in September, was considered as a sign of possible liberalisation and more conciliatory handling of Tibetan affairs by the Chinese authorities. This perception has grown even more as political imprisonment in Tibet has been in slow but steady decline since 1997, as TIN's last volume of the series 'Hostile elements', published in May, demonstrates. However, the hard line practiced by the Chinese authorities toward Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche in eastern Tibet diluted this impression. The fact that the arrest and proceedings against Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche took place under the banner of 'fighting terrorism' and ended in early January 2003 with the execution of Lobsang Dondrup, who had been close to the Rinpoche in the past, appears particularly disturbing. The dismantlement of Tenzin Deleg's religious and charitable network and the arrests that took place in its course slowed down the decline of political imprisonment in Tibet and shifted the geographical focus of repression to East Tibet.

TIN NEWS STORY

TIN NEWS UPDATE, 22 JANUARY 2002 (EDITED)

Tibetan musicologist released

Ngawang Choephel, the 38-year old Tibetan music scholar serving an 18-year sentence for espionage in China, has been released on medical parole and arrived in the United States on Sunday 20 January on a flight from Beijing to Detroit. Ngawang Choephel's release after serving six years of his sentence appears to be part of the run-up to the planned 21 February summit in Beijing between US President George Bush and Chinese President Jiang Zemin. While several high-profile Chinese dissidents such as Wang Dan have been released by China on medical parole in recent years, the early release and repatriation of a Tibetan political prisoner to another country is unprecedented. Ngawang Choephel, a former Fulbright scholar whose case was the subject of a high-profile international campaign supported by prominent US politicians among others, is expected to return to India, his country of residence, to be with his mother, Sonam Dekyi, and other members of his family after receiving medical treatment in the US.

According to a statement by John Kamm of the San Francisco-based human rights group Dui Hua Foundation, Ngawang Choephel was released under the provisions of a 1990 regulation on medical parole issued by the Ministry of Justice. The regulation states that prisoners who have contracted serious and chronic illnesses that have not been successfully treated after a long period of time and who have served at least one-third of their fixed terms sentence are eligible for medical parole. John Kamm, a former businessman and director of the American branch of the Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong, facilitated the recent dialogue with China on Ngawang Choephel's case. He said: *"I think that freeing Ngawang Choephel is part of a strategic decision by the leadership to improve relations in key constituencies in the United States. The Chinese authorities saw an opportunity to improve relations with the US post 11 September – while China has provided diplomatic and intelligence support, it has not supplied troops or allowed*



Ngawang Choephel after his arrival in the US.

©ICT

use of its military bases in the war against terrorism. The release was also timed to take place in the run-up to the US President's visit to China in February."

Ngawang Choephel was born in Tibet but was taken to India when he was two and lived most of his life there. After studying at Middlebury College in Vermont under the Fulbright scholarship scheme, he returned to Tibet in July 1995 to make a film documentary about traditional Tibetan performing arts. A number of US politicians, notably Senator James Jeffords, were involved in the high-profile international campaign for his release. In August 2000 the Chinese authorities granted Ngawang Choephel's mother, Sonam Dekyi, a visa to visit her son in prison in Chengdu, Sichuan. Senator Jeffords had opposed the permanent normalisation of trade relations between the US and China that same year because of his concerns over Ngawang Choephel's imprisonment. Ngawang Choephel's case was raised by the US during their last session of dialogue with China in October 2001. Officials in Beijing have reportedly referred to the large volume of letters in support of Ngawang Choephel's case. John Kamm told TIN: *"They specifically said that they had been impressed by letters received from members of the US Congress and representations made by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and Western governments. Amnesty International members, campaign groups and Tibetan communities all over the world wrote letters in support of Ngawang. It seems that the more communication we have with China about political prisoners, the more likely they are to benefit from better treatment in general."*

Ngawang Choephel was first detained in summer 1995 in Shigatse prefecture's police detention centre, popularly known as either Nyari Prison or Shigatse Prison, and then transferred to Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) Prison Number Two, also known as Powo Tramo, in remote Pome

(Chinese: Bomi) county, Kongpo (Ch: Lingzhi) prefecture. TIN previously reported that he was also temporarily imprisoned in Drapchi prison, Lhasa, but Ngawang Choephel said yesterday that he was not imprisoned in Drapchi at any point. He was transferred in summer 2000 to Chengdu, the capital of Sichuan province, and his final period of imprisonment was in Deyang prison, Deyang municipality, Sichuan province, located to the north-east of Chengdu. He said yesterday that as far as he knew he was the only Tibetan imprisoned at Deyang. At various points before being detained in Deyang he kept his morale high by singing while beating out a rhythm on a bucket or cell wall and by learning Tibetan folk songs from other prisoners. Sometimes after singing a song he would hear applause from other cells, he said.

In a letter to the Vermont Congressional Delegation in October 1999, China's Ambassador to the United States stated that Ngawang Choephel had contracted bronchitis, pulmonary infection and hepatitis around October 1998, and that he had been hospitalised for a period of two months. According to an informed source in the Chinese government quoted by John Kamm, Ngawang Choephel also contracted a urinary tract infection while in prison. Ngawang Choephel confirmed yesterday that he was given a full medical check-up while being held in Chengdu and that for a considerable period until September last year, he was vomiting blood and unable to eat. He has undergone a medical examination in the US, where he is staying on a tourist visa.

Ngawang Choephel arrived in Detroit on Sunday morning (20 January) accompanied by an official from the US Embassy. He was *"in good spirits"* and said to be happy to be home according to representatives from the Washington-based International Campaign for Tibet who met him at the airport.

TIN NEWS STORY

TIN NEWS UPDATE, 03 APRIL 2002 (EDITED)

Longest serving Tibetan political prisoner Jigme Zangpo released

Tagna Jigme Zangpo, the longest serving political prisoner in Tibet, was released on Sunday (31 March) on medical parole and has been told by the Chinese authorities that a request by him to seek medical treatment outside the country would be *"sympathetically considered"*. Seventy-six year old Jigme Zangpo (Tagna is a family name), a former primary school teacher, was first arrested in the 1960s and has spent most of the past 40 years in prison. His sentence was extended twice due to his political activity in prison, including shouting *"Free Tibet"* during the visit of a Swiss delegation to Drapchi (Tibet Autonomous Region Prison Number One), in 1991. Jigme Zangpo was well-known as one of the most determined and intransigent political prisoners in Drapchi, and was highly respected by other political prisoners.

The authorities have reportedly made several offers of medical parole to Jigme Zangpo over the past two years, with at least two groups of senior officials sent to Drapchi to speak to him about the possibility. Reports received by TIN suggest that because Jigme Zangpo was concerned that he

would be a burden for relatives if he was released and because he said he had become accustomed to prison life, he continued to resist these offers. He was also said to be unhappy with the authorities' emphasis on him seeking medical treatment abroad rather than staying in Tibet. When



Tagna Jigme Zangpo and John Kamm in Lhasa.

©Dui Hua

it was suggested recently that he could stay in Lhasa if he wished upon his release, but that the authorities would also give "sympathetic consideration" to an application he might make to leave the country, he finally agreed that he would leave Drapchi. Jigme Zangpo, who is much older than most political prisoners in China and Tibet who are granted medical parole, stayed with a relative in Lhasa after leaving Drapchi prison. His release just eight years before the end of his long sentence follows several years of campaigning by Tibet support groups and non-governmental organisations worldwide. Western governments, notably the Swiss and the US governments, have also raised his case with the Chinese authorities on many occasions.

Jigme Zangpo, who is from Chushur (Chinese: Chushui) in the Lhasa area, was first sentenced to three years of 're-education through labour' in 1965, because he had "subjected his students to corporal punishment", according to Chinese official sources. Reliable reports received by TIN indicate that he served a further ten-year sentence from 1970 onwards for political activities. In 1983 he received a 15-year sentence and five years deprivation of civil and political rights for "spreading and inciting counter-revolutionary propaganda" after he had been seen pasting a personally written wall poster at the gates of the Jokhang

temple in Lhasa on 12 July of that year. According to the trial and sentencing document, the poster was a criticism of "the leadership of our country", saying that: "Tibetans cannot be prosecuted for 1959 riots; demanding 'violent struggle'; and seeking 'Tibetan independence' among other reactionary propaganda". This sentence was increased by five years after he shouted "reactionary slogans" in Drapchi prison on 1 December 1988. The trial and sentencing document for this sentence extension stated that: "The court, therefore, recognises that the defendant Jigme Zangpo not only continued to carry out activities in support of the reactionary elements but went further by spreading and inciting counter-revolutionary propaganda during his imprisonment."

On 6 December 1991, Jigme Zangpo was reportedly beaten, held in solitary confinement for six weeks, and his sentence extended by eight years for shouting "Free Tibet" during a visit to Drapchi prison by the Swiss ambassador to China. This extension increased his sentence to 28 years. Following his involvement in protests at Drapchi prison on 1 and 4 May 1998, Jigme Zangpo was held in solitary confinement and, together with almost all other political prisoners in Drapchi at the time, is likely to have suffered from beatings and interrogation as a result. A former Tibetan political prisoner told TIN that during the protests, Jigme

Zangpo had urged other political prisoners not to take part in violent action during the protest. *"He feared that we would do so because we were angry,"* said the former prisoner.

There have been serious concerns for Jigme Zangpo's health for several years. The Chinese authorities admitted in answer to a query from the Beijing-based Swiss ambassador in September 1997 that he was suffering from *"hypertension"* but was in *"generally good health"*. They also told the ambassador that Jigme Zangpo had been *"excused from work duties"* at Drapchi. In 2000 the Chinese authorities admitted that Jigme Zangpo's health had deteriorated and that he had received treatment for cardiac disease. The Chinese authorities now say that he has *"illnesses associated with old age"* but that these are *"not life-threatening"*, according to John Kamm of the San Francisco-based Dui Hua Foundation, who was involved in negotiations for Jigme Zangpo's release.

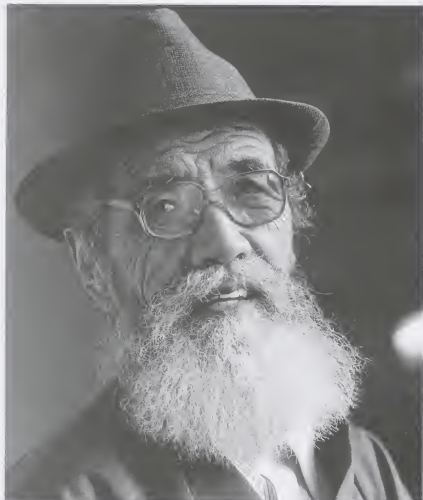
Jigme Zangpo's release on medical parole is the second high-profile release of a Tibetan political prisoner in 2002. Tibetan ethnomusicologist Ngawang Choephel was released on medical parole and arrived in the United States on 20 January after serving six years of an 18-year sentence for espionage. The release of Ngawang Choephel occurred in the run-up to the February summit in Beijing between US President George Bush and Chinese President Jiang Zemin. While Jigme Zangpo's release coincides with the annual session of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights in Geneva, it is unlikely to be linked to this meeting, as the offer of medical parole was made to him much earlier, and there is little pressure from either Europe or the US to support a resolution at this year's Commission against China's human rights record. Dui Hua Foundation Director John Kamm, who was also involved in the negotiations for the release of Ngawang Choephel, told TIN that Jigme Zangpo's release was: *"another indication that the Chinese government will eventually respond to international pressure."*

TIN NEWS STORY

TIN NEWS UPDATE, 13 JULY 2002 (EDITED)

Longest serving political prisoner arrives in the US

Tagna Jigme Zangpo, the elderly Tibetan teacher who has spent most of the past 40 years in prison, has been allowed to leave Tibet and arrived in Chicago, the US, on 13 July. Seventy-four year old Jigme Zangpo (tagna is a family name) was released from Drapchi prison in Lhasa on medical parole on 31 March. Jigme Zangpo's release follows the release of five other Tibetan political prisoners, whose cases were also raised by international governments and non-governmental organisations, before the end of their sentences this year. The Tibetan music scholar Ngawang Choephel was released after serving six years of an 18-year sentence for espionage in January, and in the past few months four Tibetan nuns were also released.



Tagna Jigme Zangpo.

©TID

Jigme Zangpo's release eight years before the end of his sentence follows several years of intense campaigning by non-governmental organisations worldwide and pressure from Western governments, notably the US and Swiss. It is unprecedented for China to release such a long-serving Tibetan political prisoner and to allow them to travel to a Western country. On 17 June, John Kamm, Executive Director of the San Francisco-based Dui Hua Foundation, who was involved in negotiations for the release, was allowed to meet Jigme Zangpo in Lhasa during an official visit to Tibet's capital. In a statement issued today, Kamm reported that under the terms of medical parole, Jigme Zangpo had not been permitted to leave the family residence apart from visits to hospital under the escort of Public Security Bureau personnel. He was clearly fearful of being returned to prison. During the visit Jigme Zangpo, who suffers from high blood pressure, heart disease and trembling in his hands and feet, told Kamm that he would like to seek medical treatment in the US.

Jigme Zangpo, who is from Chusur (Chinese: Chushui) in the Lhasa area, was first sentenced to three years of 're-

education through labour' in 1965 and reliable reports received by TIN indicate that he served a further ten-year sentence from 1970 onwards for political activities. In 1983 he received a 15-year sentence for "*spreading and inciting counter-revolutionary propaganda*" after he had been seen pasting a personally written wall poster at the gates of the Jokhang temple in Lhasa on 12 July that year. Jigme Zangpo's sentence was extended twice due to his political activity in prison, including shouting "*Free Tibet*" during the visit of a Swiss delegation to Drapchi in 1991. This extension increased his sentence to 28 years. Jigme Zangpo was well-known and widely respected by other political prisoners, for his determination and dedication to the cause of an independent Tibet.

Jigme Zangpo, who was accompanied by an official from the US Embassy in China on his flight from Beijing today, will be staying with a member of his family who resides in the US during his initial period of medical treatment. A spokesperson for the US State Department told TIN: "*This development is a result of the active involvement of several US administrations, the Department of State and our diplomats posted in China, Congress, private Americans and the NGO community.*" Releases of this nature are matters of sensitive and skillful diplomacy and are subject to unexpected developments until completed. Jigme Zangpo was reportedly "*elated*" to arrive in the US and had a "*joyful*" reunion with his relative.

TIN NEWS STORY

TIN NEWS UPDATE, 26 JUNE 2002 (EDITED)

Tibetan nun and political prisoner Ngawang Choezom released

Tibetan nun and political prisoner, Ngawang Choezom, has been released from Drapchi prison nine months before completing her sentence. Ngawang Choezom was one of the 14 nuns who received sentence extensions for making a tape recording of songs in prison in June 1993. Following the May 1998 protests in Drapchi prison, she was one of the nuns singled out for particularly harsh punishment. Her release last Friday, 21 June, follows news earlier this year of the release of three of the other 'singing nuns of Drapchi prison', Gyaltsen Drolkar, Ngawang Choekyi and Tenzin Thubten.¹

Ngawang Choezom, also known as Pasang Lhamo (lay name) and Awang Quzong (Chinese) a nun from Chubsang Nunnery was detained on 21 March 1992 at the age of 22 for participating in a demonstration. On 4 September of the same year she was sentenced by the Lhasa Municipal Intermediate People's Court to five years imprisonment for "*engaging in subversive activities*". She was originally incarcerated at the Gutso Public Security Bureau (PSB) detention centre in Lhasa but was then transferred to Drapchi prison (Tibet Autonomous Region Prison Number One) also in Lhasa.

In June 1993 Ngawang Choezom together with several other nuns held in Drapchi Prison secretly recorded an audio cassette on which they sang songs referring in poetic metaphors to freedom, independence and the sadness at having lost Tibet to China. Each nun added her own contribution. When the prison authorities discovered what they had done after the tape had been smuggled out of prison, all nuns who had participated were severely punished, and their sentences, which ranged from three to

seven years, were increased by five to nine years. Ngawang Choezom's sentence was increased from five to eleven years. She was therefore due for release on 21 March 2003.

After the protests of May 1998 in Drapchi Prison² Ngawang Choezom was severely beaten during interrogations and then placed under lockdown conditions or in solitary confinement for extended periods of time. She and Ngawang Sangdrol are reported to have been punished particularly severely. Like other nuns accused of involvement in the protests, Ngawang Choezom was not allowed to receive visitors after May 1998.

Ngawang Choezom's release was confirmed by Chinese authorities, but with no official explanation, it is assumed she was released either on medical parole, or that she had earlier showed signs of 'repentance' and received a sentence reduction. Ngawang Choezom is one of a number of high-profile Tibetan political prisoners who have recently been released before the end of their sentences.

¹ See TIN News Update 20 February 1994 Nun's Sentence Increased to 17 Years for Singing Song

² See TIN News Updates of 15 December 1999 and 14 June 2002

TIN NEWS STORY

TIN NEWS UPDATE, 17 OCTOBER 2002 (EDITED)

Ngawang Sangdrol Released

Ngawang Sangdrol was released today from Drapchi Prison in Lhasa (Tibet Autonomous Region Prison Number One) nine years before the completion of her sentence. The young nun was serving the longest sentence of any female political prisoner in Tibet before being released on parole for good behaviour. Ngawang Sangdrol, who was detained at the age of 13 and then again at the age of 15, has now been reunited with her family. She is one of the Tibetan political prisoners whose release has most frequently been requested by Western governments and human rights organisations. Since the beginning of this year, China has released seven prominent Tibetan political prisoners before the end of their sentences.

Ngawang Sangdrol (lay name: Rigchog), born in Lhasa in 1977 and a nun of Garu nunnery, first became involved in political activities when she was only 11 years old, participating in pro-independence demonstrations in Lhasa in 1987-88. When she was 13 years old, Ngawang Sangdrol again took part in political protests with other nuns and was detained in Gutsa detention centre. During this time she was reportedly beaten so badly that she sustained permanent damage to both hands. She was released after nine months, by which time her mother had died, her father, Namgyal Tashi, and her brother Tenzin Sherab, had been arrested for political activities, and several members of her family had escaped into exile. As a former political prisoner, she was not allowed to rejoin her nunnery.

Following her arrest in June 1992 at age 15, for attempting to demonstrate, Ngawang Sangdrol was sentenced to three years imprisonment in the autumn of the same year. In 1993, she and 13 other nuns tape-recorded songs about their love for their families and for their homeland and the cassette was smuggled out of Drapchi prison. As a result, Ngawang Sangdrol had her sentence extended by six years and together with the other nuns she was severely beaten.

Ngawang Sangdrol received a second sentence extension in 1996 following her participation in several incidents at Drapchi. She was reportedly among a number of female political prisoners who protested about the official Panchen Lama candidate during meetings initiated by the Drapchi authorities in spring 1996. Ngawang Sangdrol also refused to stand up when a prison officer entered her cell, and shouted "Free Tibet" when she and other women were made to stand in the rain as a punishment for refusing to keep their cells clean.

Ngawang Sangdrol's third sentence extension was handed down by the Lhasa Municipal Intermediate People's Court in October 1998. Its exact length was not clear, but her new release date was said to be 2013 (her total sentence then

being 21 years). This extension appeared to be a result of her involvement in protests at Drapchi prison in May 1998 linked to the visit of a European Union ambassadorial delegation and individual protests later in the same year. In September 2001 her father, Namgyal Tashi, died at his home in Lhasa.³



Ngawang Sangdrol, circa 1992. ©TIN

In October 2001 Ngawang Sangdrol's sentence was reduced by 18 months, according to the Chinese authorities, for "showing genuine repentance and willingness to reform". It was also reported that she had been exempted from hard labour, and was given "light work suitable for female inmates, e.g. knitting and weaving."

Ngawang Sangdrol's health has reportedly been poor in recent years. However, according to John Kamm, director of the Dui Hua Foundation, who played an important part in bringing about Ngawang Sangdrol's release, she was not released on medical parole but due to a regulation that makes prisoners who enter prison as juveniles eligible for early release. The same statement by the Dui Hua Foundation specifies that the parole decision could therefore not be made by the Lhasa Intermediate People's Court alone but had to be ratified by the Tibet Autonomous Region Higher People's Court as well as the Supreme People's Court of the People's Republic of China.

It is conspicuous that the timing of Ngawang Sangdrol's release coincides with President Jiang Zemin's pending visit to the US. Nonetheless, this release is the seventh this year of a prominent Tibetan political prisoner. This emerging pattern may indicate that the Chinese authorities are developing a new approach towards political imprisonment in Tibet. According to TIN's research the number of political prisoners in Tibet has been in sustained decline in recent years.⁴ However, as of February 2002 the number of current political prisoners known to TIN remained at 188, 100 of them being believed to be at Drapchi prison.

³ See TIN News Update 25 September 2001

⁴ See TIN's publication 'In the Interests of the State'

The case of Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche

TIN NEWS STORY

TIN NEWS UPDATE, 24 APRIL 2002 (EDITED)

Bomb blast in Chengdu

A bomb exploded in Chengdu, the capital of Sichuan province, on 3 April, injuring at least one person, according to reports from China. The bomb, which was described to TIN as a *"simple fuse device"*, was planted in the city's main square (Tianfu Square), which is dominated by a large statue of Mao Zedong. A report by Xinhua today in English confirmed that arrests had been made following the explosions. No information is available as to who planted the bomb or whether their motives were political. There have been various rumours in Chengdu linking the bomb to Tibetans, but other rumours have blamed disaffected Chinese workers and Falun Gong practitioners among others. Chengdu lies east of the area traditionally known as Kham to Tibetans and now incorporated into Kardze (Chinese: Ganzi) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture (TAP) and Ngaba (Ch: Aba) Tibetan and Qiang Autonomous Prefecture.

Xinhua reported that the bomb, which exploded at 12 noon local time on 3 April, caused *"many injuries"*. A report received by TIN indicated that one passer-by was slightly injured in the blast. Xinhua reported that a 20,000 yuan (US\$2,416/£1,668) reward had been given to a college student identified as Zhang for giving information that led to the arrests. The report stated: *"Chengdu's police chief Li Jian praised Zhang for his high moral standards and strength of will, and called on all citizens to learn from him and help the police in safeguarding peace and security"* (Xinhua, 24 April).

TIN has received reports of at least two other bomb explosions in Sichuan during the past few years, including a bomb at the gate of a local government office in Dartsedo (Ch: Kangding) in Kardze TAP on 2 August 2001. The authorities reacted to this bombing by imposing tight security, including police check-points on roads into the town, and not allowing tourists to use email at internet

cafes, probably in order to prevent news of the incident spreading. The bombing of a small medical clinic in Kardze county in October 1999 led to the arrest of senior religious teacher Sonam Phuntsog and a demonstration by Tibetans in his support in Kardze county town.⁵ During dialogue with Western governments, Chinese officials have apparently blamed the Dalai Lama for the bombings in Sichuan and others in the Tibet Autonomous Region, with one senior member of an official Chinese delegation to the West comparing the Dalai Lama to the Taliban.

During the last seven years, there have been at least eight bomb explosions in Tibet's capital, Lhasa. In May 1996, the authorities stated that the *"Dalai clique"* in exile was responsible for two explosions that had taken place that year (one of them outside the Lhasa headquarters of the Chinese Communist Party) and more generally for undermining security in the Tibet Autonomous Region.

TIN NEWS STORY

TIN NEWS UPDATE, 05 MAY 2002 (EDITED)

Senior Rinpoche detained on *"bombing"* charges

A charismatic senior Tibetan religious teacher, Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche (layname: Ngawang Tashi) has been arrested on suspicion of involvement in bomb explosions in Kardze (Chinese: Ganzi) Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture in Sichuan province (a part of the eastern Tibetan region of Kham).

Fifty-two year old Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche, from Lithang (Chinese: Litang) county in Kardze Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture, was detained in early April and his current whereabouts and condition are not known. At least three of his students may also have been detained. Reports from the area suggest that the authorities might have already charged the Rinpoche with involvement in three bomb explosions in the Kardze prefecture, and also with a minor bomb explosion that occurred in Chengdu on 3 April. A

Tibetan source told TIN: *"The authorities' accusations seem to be very vague – they are not saying that he planted the bombs but that he was involved in some sort of conspiracy."*

The authorities in Kardze are known to have been concerned for some time about Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche's influence in the area, and they may also have suspicions of his connections to the Dalai Lama. The Rinpoche first

⁵ See: <http://www.tibetinfo.net/news-updates/nr171199.htm>

came under close political scrutiny after a five-year stay in India from 1982 to 1987, when he studied at Drepung monastery in south India. During this time he was recognised by the Dalai Lama as a reincarnation of a senior religious teacher at Lithang monastery. Following his return from India, the Rinpoche had faced various obstacles from officials. When local authorities objected to him setting up a new monastery called Jamyang Choekhong Ling in his home area, Nyagchu (a nomadic area, named after the river that runs through the county) in Lithang, the Rinpoche travelled to Beijing and obtained permission from the 10th Panchen Lama a year before his death in 1989.

During the 1990s, Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche supported local people in the reconstruction of various smaller monasteries and a nunnery, and he was involved in activities to provide homes and education for children from poor local families. The county authorities refused him permission to build a school and an old people's home for the nomads. In the late 1990s, however, he successfully set up a school in Lithang for both Tibetan and Chinese children, mostly orphans, providing education in Tibetan, Chinese, mathematics, music and games to at least 130 pupils.

The local authorities made a first attempt to detain the Rinpoche in 1998 on the grounds that he had established new monasteries *"in a private capacity by holding aloft the banner of 'Lamaism' without approval of the state government"* and because he had *"violated the established policies of the state"* (a Tibetan language report on the website Tibetan Freedom, the Tibetan government in exile, 22 April). They also suspected that the Rinpoche had secretly been the leader of a popular protest against deforestation in the area by a timber company.

Local people took the risk of issuing a petition, a copy of which has been obtained by TIN, in support of Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche. The document is typed in Chinese and refers in the first line to the positive impact the Rinpoche had on social problems afflicting the area. It praises the Rinpoche's teachings and his skills as an arbitrator, stating that there has been a decrease both in crime and in tension between local Tibetans and Chinese settlers. *"He never says that one particular nationality is good and another is bad. Generally speaking, the aim of his scriptural teaching was: firstly, to educate us to do good deeds, and not to do bad deeds, secondly, to teach us to respect the old and love the young, and thirdly, all along he taught us not to violate Party policies."* The petition is signed in the name of several Tibetan and Chinese families and concludes with an appeal to the local authorities for a *"good verdict"* on the Rinpoche. The Rinpoche was later able to return from the area where he had temporarily taken refuge.

In 2000 the authorities reportedly ordered the Rinpoche to close down the school in Lithang and made a second

attempt to arrest him. Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche one more time resorted to leaving the area, and local people reportedly signed their names to a petition in his support. The authorities again responded to their concern although this time they imposed the condition that he should live *"the quiet life of an ordinary monk"* without involvement in any *"political"* activities after his return. They also imposed certain restrictions on his movements (Tibetan Freedom, 22 April). The Tibetan source told TIN that when the Rinpoche returned to the area: *"Many people turned out to welcome him back. It was very emotional."* After 2000 Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche travelled throughout Kardze prefecture to give teachings. Reports from his followers that he travelled very simply, without a large entourage, convey their impression of him as someone who did not have materialistic values and was not concerned about status.

Despite the considerable influence and popularity he enjoyed in the area of Lithang, Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche has also has been a highly controversial figure for years due to his resolute campaigning against the worship of the protective deity Shugden. The cult of Shugden has been discouraged by the Dalai Lama for many years and, after his return from India, Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche acquired local notoriety as an activist against Shugden. These activities raised considerable opposition, particularly in Lithang monastery. At one point, the monastery is said to have been divided into two opposing factions with frequent clashes between them. The established clergy in the Lithang area are known to be particular fervent adepts of the deity. TIN sources report many incidents which arose around the controversy during several years. Lately the situation appears to have calmed down with Shugden-followers and Shugden-opponents choosing to avoid rather than fight each other. However, following the years of clashes, rumours in the region attributed criminal activities to Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche, including abductions, weapon smuggling from Yunnan and racket.

Local people are known to be deeply concerned about Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche's latest detention. The same Tibetan source told TIN: *"The authorities have tried to arrest the Rinpoche before, but this time local people know it is more serious. (...) I've heard that now people are too frightened to protest about his recent arrest, given the current political situation."* Since the terrorist attack on the World Trade Centre in New York on 11 September 2001, the Chinese government has branded many presumed *'ethnic separatist'* as *'terrorist'*. One of the amendments to the Criminal Law of the People's Republic of China adopted in December 2001 increases punishments for people who *"organise or lead a terrorist organisation"* from three to ten years imprisonment to between ten years and life imprisonment (Article 120 of the Criminal Law). The term *"terrorist organisation"* is not defined in the law and it could be interpreted to cover religious or other groups that act in

ways that are perceived as being in opposition to the state, but which have apparently not engaged in violent activities.

The arrest of Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche confirms the trend among the authorities to perceive charismatic and influential religious leaders in Tibet as a threat, presumably due to their ability to gain respect and trust among the population. This seems to be the case even then when these religious leaders acknowledge the authority of the state and, by acting as local mediators, propagating moral values, spreading *"harmony between the nationalities"* and solving social problems, act according to agendas that converge with those of the Chinese Communist Party. This pattern has already been evident in Qinghai province (the

traditional north-eastern Tibetan area of Amdo), where several key religious figures and scholars, working within the community, and often tacitly supported by officials, have been detained in the last few years.

The detention of Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche seems to be a continuation of this pattern in Kham as seen in the removal of the senior teacher Khenpo Jigme Phuntsog from the Serthar Tibetan Buddhist institute in the valley of Larung Gar in Kardze, and also the arrest of senior religious teacher Sonam Phuntsog, who is now serving five years in prison after allegedly being blamed for the bombing of a medical clinic in Kardze.

BACKGROUND

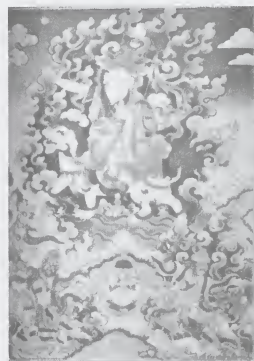
Protective deities and the Shugden controversy

In Tibetan Buddhism 'protective' or 'guardian-deities' (Tib.: Sungma) are believed to be tangible entities, the cult of which often goes back to pre-Buddhist religious beliefs. It is believed that these 'powerful' deities have been subjugated by Buddhist saints in the course of their missionary activities and 'transformed' into 'protectors' of the Buddhist religion. Regular ceremonies are performed in order to insure that the protective deities will continue acting for the benefit of religion and its followers. While many protective deities and their influence are believed to be bound to a limited area, some of them are thought to exert their influence all over Tibet. The two most important protective deities are Palden Lhamo, the 'protectress' of Tibet and Pehar, the deity believed to take possession of the state oracle of the traditional Tibetan Government.

Dorje Shugden is a comparatively recent protective deity, believed to have appeared first during the life-time of the fifth Dalai Lama (1617-1682) and who is considered a major protective deity of the Gelugpa, the most influential school of Tibetan Buddhism. In the twentieth century, the cult of Shugden was particularly promoted in Sera monastery, Lhasa, by the Gelugpa Lama Phabongka. One of Phabongka's main disciple was Trijang Rinpoche, one of the two tutors of the present Dalai Lama, who, like other Gelugpa followers from Eastern Tibet, particularly in the Lithang area, strongly emphasised the differences between the Gelugpa and other schools of Tibetan Buddhism. In these regions where the Gelugpa school has been traditionally a minority, the cult of Shugden has been particularly deep-rooted.

In the exile situation the predominance of the Gelugpa school, from which the Dalai Lama comes, has often disturbed the unity of the Tibetan community. It is partly in this relation that the current Dalai Lama at an early point of time began to question the practice of the Shugden cult and personally gave it up, encouraging other Tibetans to do the same. In 1996, the Dalai Lama reiterated his refusal of the Shugden cult in stronger terms, which led to a major controversy among the Gelugpa school and to a schism among the Gelugpas. Geshe Kelsang Gyatso from the reconstructed Sera monastery in South India founded the New Kadampa school. The new school, which propagates the cult of Shugden, has found few open followers among Tibetans, but it claims to have developed 600 centres in Western countries.

In Tibet, the Chinese authorities are known to have used the controversy to undermine Tibetan loyalties to the Dalai Lama. Though this strategy does not seem to have been particularly successful at the level of the people, some Shugden followers appear to have been raised to positions in the state apparatus or in state-sanctioned Buddhist associations.



TESTIMONY

“They are trying to remove our lama”

The following account was provided to TIN in November 1998 by two former monks from Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche's main monastery, Thegchen Jangchub Choeling. It reflects the growing difficulties which Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche faced in the course of the 1990s.

There are about 400 monks in Thegchen Jangchub Choeling monastery. It was built in 1988. Our lama Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche went to India in 1980. He studied at Drepung monastery in South India for 6 years. He then returned to Tibet and built this new monastery.

In 1995 the authorities came to our monastery to arrest monks from our monastery, and the public jointly stopped the authorities from arresting them. Our place used to be thickly forested, but the forest is declining and almost disappearing due to excessive deforestation. So people protested against deforestation activities, therefore the government warned them that they would be arrested.

Last year, the authorities planned to arrest Lama Tenzin Deleg from our monastery. So he fled to the hills in the night of the 4th of June in 1997. He was at the Lithang Gonchen monastery before he went to India. He came back to Lithang monastery from India in 1986 and told there that it was not good to devote to the Shugden deity and thereafter the trouble arose. So he left the Lithang monastery and started to build a new monastery. So far that the Chinese and some lamas from Lithang monastery disliked him. Besides that, he recognised some trulku's. He established five monastery, and old people's home, crèches etc. So many people felt jealous of him and spread malicious rumours about his works to the government. In July 1997, our monks and many other people went to Nyagchu county to demonstrate and to request the authorities not to arrest our lama. A petition reached the Central Government. Then the Central Government officially stated that they lama should not be arrested and so the lama was not arrested.

Lama Tenzin Deleg built a nunnery, and several monasteries. He is planning to build a school and an old people's home. But the government stopped this. The buildings were constructed in 1995 but there are no students in the school.

Since the controversy arose over the Shugden issue, our Lama hasn't had relations with the Lithang monastery and all the monks broke any connection with the Lithang monastery. In June this year two lamas from Lithang monastery stopped worshipping Shugden, and so our monastery invited them to our monastery.

Our Lama built the nursery for orphaned children, but it was destroyed last year when he fled into the hills. Rinpoche reopened the nursery when he returned from the hills after it had been declared that he wouldn't be arrested. The nursery is located very close to Nyagchu county. Chinese and Tibetan are taught there; English isn't taught. Both male and female students can join the nursery. They don't have to pay school fees. Food, clothing and lodging are provided by the lama. He cares and looks after poor people and people who come from other places.

It's difficult to get education at my monastery as it is hard to find teachers. We don't go to Lithang monastery to study because Shugden is worshipped there. There are about 3000 monks at Lithang monastery. The two lamas who stopped worshipping Shugden told us to restore our relationship with Lithang monastery. But we didn't agree with them because we are followers of His Holiness the Dalai Lama. If they stop their worship of Shugden we will restore our relationship.

Our lama is at the monastery in the county seat. Our problems are that there is no religious freedom and they are trying to remove our lama. The Chinese didn't say anything directly on the Shugden issue, but they are creating problems indirectly.

“Now the people are under pressure”

The following is an interview of a man from Lithang who knew Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche. The interview was recorded by TIN in November 2002.

Q: How many monasteries has Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche constructed?

A: He has constructed 6 to 7 monasteries without the government's permission. He also constructed a school in a village called Geshe village, one or two km from Nyagchu Dzong away. There were about 300 students, but this school has been closed down now.

Q: Where did the children come from?

A: Most came from nomad families, but there were some students from farmer families as well. When the school was first established, there were about 30 students, all were orphans. Later the school was extended and then there were about 300 students.

Q: Who sponsored the establishment of the school?

A: The school didn't have a specific sponsorship and all the school expenses like the salaries of the teachers, the food for the students and clothes etc. were paid by Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche himself.

Q: How did Rinpoche get such amount of money?

A: Rinpoche gave many teachings to very many people and the people would offer a lot of things during these teachings. The authorities didn't allow him to have sponsors from foreign countries.

Q: Rinpoche stayed in India for 6 years...

A: ... yes, he stayed in South India, I was there with him. [Then, after his return from there], he had a lot of problems with Lithang monastery about the case of the Shugden deity. Rinpoche went to Tibet with a lot of cassettes, tapes and books about the Shugden deity. When Rinpoche tried to handle the situation in Lithang monastery, the problem could not be solved because the monks in Lithang monastery didn't listen to him. At that time, the Shugden deity was very popular in the monastery. Therefore Rinpoche quit the monastery and said, "If you want to continue to be against the Dalai lama and continue worshipping the Shugden deity, I can't stay with you anymore". He also reproached them to be materialistic. He said, "until the Shugden issue is not cleaned up in this monastery, I will not come back." He then established a new monastery. Earlier, there was no monastery and the monks gathered for praying in tents per year. Rinpoche faced very many problems while establishing the monastery. He didn't get the permission from the local authorities to establish the monastery. Rinpoche asked at all levels, from the district to Beijing. At that time, the [late, 11th.] Panchen Lama was still alive and he finally got the permission from the Panchen Lama. The Panchen Lama also gave a name to the monastery, Kham Nalenda Thegchen Jamchen Choeling. After that Rinpoche also established a home for aged people and a kindergarten nearby the monastery. This was done very discreetly, in order not to offend the authorities. There are aged people who are really poor and who faced difficulties. The children were orphans. When the school was established, Rinpoche didn't get permission from the Chinese government. He also established a nunnery near the monastery, and there are about 30 to 40 nuns.

Q: Then Rinpoche had to flee?

A: Yes, twice. The authorities tried hard to arrest Rinpoche and Rinpoche had to escape and hide. Rinpoche had constructed many monasteries and a very big chorten [a buddhist monument], the place used to be farming land, and the owner of the land offered this place to Rinpoche, but the authorities said, "Rinpoche has pressured on the people and exploited the land. Rinpoche is someone who changes the minds of the people. He has also constructed many schools without the government permission etc."

The first time he escaped to Amdo [(the biggest part of the traditional Tibetan province of Amdo is today part of the Qinghai province)] and nobody knew where he was. He came back after six or seven months. Before that there was a demonstration in front of the PSB office, also some people wrote a letter to the Chinese government. The government said they would take care of Rinpoche if he has nothing to do with political activities. Therefore Rinpoche came back. This is the first time when he had to flee.

The second time, he went to the mountains because a document had been disseminated which said that he had committed national crimes. There are six chapters in this document. Rinpoche managed to escape this time again because he had relations with some other Chinese and Tibetan people who are in high positions. He went to a nomad area called Mola and he stayed in a meditation cave for about two months. Then again people sent a letter to the Chinese government.

Q: Rinpoche managed to escape twice and at that time the people stood up for Rinpoche and Rinpoche could come back. What is it like now?

A: Now the people are under pressure. When Rinpoche was arrested, there were 200 PSB officials around the monastery. Some people tried to collect some money [for Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche's trial], but [one of them.] Dondrub Tsering, was arrested and he is still being detained. He is also the person who took Rinpoche's letter to the Chinese government in Beijing, both times when Rinpoche was arrested before.

TIN NEWS STORY

TIN NEWS UPDATE, 06 DECEMBER 2002 (EDITED)

Senior Rinpoche and supporter face execution for "bombing" offences

Senior lama, Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche, 52, and one of his Tibetan supporters, Lobsang Dondrub, face execution after being sentenced to death by the Intermediate People's Court in Karze (Chinese: Ganzi), Sichuan province, on 2 December. Lobsang Dondrub was sentenced to death for "committing crimes of explosions, inciting separatism and illegal possession of guns and ammunition" and Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche, from Lithang (Chinese: Litang) county in Kardze prefecture, was sentenced to death with a two year suspension for "causing explosions and inciting separatism", according to a report published on the Chinese website Zhong Xin Sichuan Wang yesterday (5 December). The severe sentences are the first reported instances for many years of the death penalty being imposed against Tibetans for offences with a political background. They occur only a few months after communications resumed between China and the Tibetan government in exile regarding possible dialogue.⁶

The Chinese official report on the trial linked the sentences to a bomb that exploded in the main Tianfu Plaza in Chengdu on 3 April, stating that Lobsang Dondrub (named as Luorang Dengzhu) escaped from the scene after causing the explosion. The report also states that the two Tibetans were involved in similar attacks in Dartsedo (Ch: Kangding) and Lithang county, and that leaflets advocating "the separation of Tibet from the motherland" were found at the scene of each of the bombings. One fatality had resulted from the series of explosions, according to the same report, which gives no indication of the nature of evidence against the two Tibetans.

Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche, has been in custody since early April and there has been no official information on his whereabouts and the charges against him until now.

Chinese journalists have recently been discussing the case of Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche on various websites. Wang Lixiong, the Chinese historian and author of the well-known book about Tibet, "Sky Burial", expressed concern about the Rinpoche soon after his detention in an article which was published online from 14 April onwards on various Chinese news websites including the New York-based Duo Yei website, one of the most popular in China, and in Chinese publications. In the article, Wang expressed concern that the Rinpoche was found guilty before any trial took place; he wrote in April: "At present, although the courts have not yet formally pronounced judgment, Ganzi prefecture has already launched a campaign to 'expose A'an Zhaxi' (...) I heard the following threat made to the masses by a village head in Yajiang [county], acting as required by the higher authorities: 'Whoever says a word to help A'an Zhaxi will be treated as a criminal in the same case.' If this is the situation, even if A'an Zhaxi really is guilty, tens of thousands of the local people will never believe it, and will hand it down as another historical example of the Han government oppressing the Tibetan people."

The death sentences imposed on Tenzin Deleg and Lobsang Dondrub are particularly significant because in recent years the Xinjiang Uighur Autonomous Region has

been the only part of China where prisoners are known to have been sentenced to execution in cases related to political issues. Since the terrorist attacks in New York on 11 September 2001, the Chinese government has increasingly sought to seek international support for its linkage of 'ethnic separatism' with 'terrorism', mainly with regard to Muslim Uighurs in Xinjiang.

According to Article 48 of the Chinese Criminal Law, the death penalty "is only to be applied to criminal elements who commit the most heinous crimes". Article 48 also states that all sentences of death must be submitted to the Supreme People's Court for approval, and that: "Sentences of death with suspension of execution may be decided or approved by a high people's court". Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche's sentence needs approval from the province level court in Chengdu, and Lobsang Dondrub's sentence from the Supreme People's Court before implementation. According to Article 50 of the Criminal Law, when a prisoner "does not intentionally commit a crime during the period of suspension, he is to be given a reduction of sentence to life imprisonment upon the expiration of the two-year period (...) if there is verified evidence that he has intentionally committed a crime, the death penalty is to be executed upon the approval of the Supreme People's Court."

The death sentences imposed by Kardze Intermediate People's Court on the Rinpoche and Lobsang Dondrub may prove to be of wider significance with respect to relations between the Chinese authorities and the Tibetan government in exile in Dharamsala. So far this year, there has been the unprecedented early release by China of six Tibetan political prisoners. The Dalai Lama's Special Envoys also participated in talks in Beijing and Lhasa, the first formal contact between the Tibetan leader and China since summer 1993. The harshness of these sentences is in stark contrast to these earlier developments. These sentences have also been imposed at a sensitive time in US-China relations: the US government is holding its first human rights dialogue session since October 2001 with China in Beijing on 17 December.

6 See chapter 2 7 A'an Zhaxi is a Chinese transliteration of Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche's lay name, Ngawang Tashi.

WHAT HAPPENED SUBSEQUENTLY:

On 13 December, a Kardze court official told the news agency Agence France-Presse that Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche and Lobsang Dondrub have appealed against their sentences. The same official told AFP that the Sichuan Higher People's Court would be reviewing their appeals.

Two prominent Chinese lawyers, Zhang Sizhi and Li Huigeng, who had been commissioned by supporters of Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche to represent him during the appeal were denied permission by the authorities to do so or meet the Rinpoche.

On Sunday 26 January 2003, the Higher People's Court of Sichuan Province in Chengdu confirmed the death sentences given to both prisoners. Lobsang Dondrub was executed on the same day. Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche's sentence was suspended for two years. In China suspended capital sentences are usually commuted to life imprisonment.

During December 2002 and January 2003, it became known that 10 to 15 further persons from Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche's entourage have been arrested together with him or following his arrest. It appears as a consequence that the complete network of religious and charitable activities constructed in the region by Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche has been virtually dismantled.

Prisons and imprisonment

TIN NEWS STORY

TIN NEWS UPDATE, 06 JUNE 2002 (EDITED)

Confirmation of sentence for orphanage director

New reports from Tibet obtained by TIN disclose that Jigme Tenzin Rinpoche (known as "Bangri" Rinpoche) and his partner Nyima Choedron, both of whom formerly ran the Gyatso Children's Home near the Norbulingka in Lhasa (the former summer palace of the Dalai Lama), are serving long-term sentences in prison for charges including espionage and endangering state security. Both were arrested in 1999. The exact accusations which led to their arrest, as well as the length of their sentences remain, however, unknown.

Jigme Tenzin Rinpoche and his partner, a former nun, were arrested in August or October 1999 (the exact date is unclear). This case remains one of the least understood cases of detention in Lhasa in recent years and has been the source of much speculation both inside and outside Tibet. Before being closed down by the local authorities following the arrest of its two senior teachers, the Gyatso Children's Home had about 50 pupils between the age of 3 and 15, most of whom were said to be orphans from different parts of the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR). The project appeared to be running well. Most of its sponsors were foreigners – the Rinpoche had visited India at least once in the 1990s, and he had also been to the US.

It seems that problems first arose in connection with the construction of second school or orphanage. Reports indicate that the Rinpoche was working with the building

contractor Tashi Tsering on the construction of this building. Tashi Tsering staged a protest in August 1999 during the National Minority Games in Lhasa by attempting to explode a bomb. He also tried to lower the Chinese flag in the Potala Square on the same occasion.⁸ He died in prison in February 2000, allegedly after severe maltreatment⁹. Jigme Tenzin Rinpoche and Nyima's arrest may therefore be linked to their presumed relationship with Tashi Tsering.

However, according to other reports, the Rinpoche had been involved in a quarrel with a construction company which may have led to his denunciation. Such incidents have become relatively frequent in recent years within the aggressive construction business in Lhasa. There are also reports alleging that the Rinpoche had been involved in corruption and financial irregularities as well as other

8 See: <http://www.tibetinfo.net/news-updates/nu100999.htm>

9 See: <http://www.tibetinfo.net/news-updates/nu131099.htm>; <http://www.tibetinfo.net/news-updates/nu230300.htm>



Gyatso

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criminal activities. According to a former pupil of the school, staff and students were told that the Rinpoche had been arrested and put in court in connection with the construction of the building.

The recently reported nature of the charges against the Rinpoche and Nyima seems to confirm that there is a political aspect to the case, since the phrase *"espionage and endangering state security"* is a common circumlocution for 'political' offences. In addition, certain non-political and non-security-related charges may also have been levied against them. However, since no details of the case have been revealed, this could not be confirmed.

Following the arrest of the Rinpoche and Nyima Choedron, the PSB (Public Security Bureau) searched all bedrooms and classrooms of the school. Sources state that the bank account of the school was frozen following its closure. At least five teachers and carers at the children's home were reportedly arrested and several served sentences in prison. All staff have since been released apart from Geleg Nyima, a Tibetan thangka painting teacher, who is reportedly still held in custody. According to information received by TIN, some children of the orphanage were interrogated by police in Lhasa. This interrogation was apparently stopped after local officials expressed concern about the possible adverse effects on the children. After the closure of the school, several of the nearly 50 children were taken back to the areas they came from, including Chamdo (Ch: Changdu) county town, in Chamdo prefecture, eastern Tibet Autonomous Region. Some were taken back to Lhasa, because no one could be found to look after them, and some reportedly ended up begging on the streets of Lhasa.

TIN NEWS STORY

TIN NEWS UPDATE, 14 JUNE 2002 (EDITED)

New reports on Tibetan prisoners following May 1998 Drapchi protests

TIN has recently received several reports providing new information on six prisoners connected with the prison protests of May 1998 in Drapchi (Tibet Autonomous Region Prison Number One). One of these reports gives details on the case of the two criminal prisoners, Karma Dawa and Karma Sonam, who began the protests. Whereas earlier reports stated that at least one of them died after the disturbances, both are now known to be alive. Karma Sonam is still in prison while Karma Dawa managed to escape from a prison hospital, just a few days after undergoing liver surgery. He then fled into exile AND is currently living in India.

Another report provides details of small reductions in the sentences of two well-known nuns, Ngawang Sangdrol and Phuntsog Nyidrol, whose well-being is of continued concern. Further reports state that the two nuns Ngawang Choekyi and Tenzin Thubten have been recently released before the end of their sentences. All six prisoners were subjected to severe maltreatment following the May 1998 protests at the prison and received sentence extensions.

Karma Dawa (also known as Kardar) and Karma Sonam began a protest on 1 May 1998 at Drapchi prison by shouting slogans such as *"Free Tibet"* and *"Long live the Dalai Lama"* at a flag-raising ceremony convened by the prison authorities. Other prisoners joined in shouting

slogans. TIN originally reported that Karma Dawa, who was detained in 1995, was either executed or died following maltreatment.

Prisoners who participated in the 1 May protest and in a

second protest on 4 May – the same day as the visit of a European Union troika delegation to Drapchi – were subjected to severe maltreatment including beatings and solitary confinement. At least eight prisoners, three monks and five nuns, died following the protests, and sentence extensions were handed down to at least 19 political and criminal prisoners¹⁰.

The involvement of two criminal prisoners, Karma Dawa and Karma Sonam, in a political protest, and the sense of unity among both criminal and political prisoners revealed by the May 1998 demonstrations, is likely to have been of serious concern to the authorities. These two categories of inmates are often segregated by the authorities in different units of Drapchi prison owing to fears that prisoners of conscience will influence criminals with political ideas.

The Chinese government continues to deny that any deaths occurred as a result of the May 1998 protests. Chinese officials previously told Western governments that an inquiry had been launched into the prison protests, but then during a recent session of dialogue with a Western government the Chinese authorities denied that there had been any protests at all although they claimed there had instead been an *"incident"* at the prison in May 1998 *"in connection with a depressed female prisoner who committed or attempted suicide"*.

The Chinese authorities also stated that Ngawang Sangdrol, a 25 year old nun from Garu nunnery who was first arrested when she was just 13 and who was 15 when she started serving her current sentence, has had her sentence reduced by one and a half years as she showed *"signs of repentance last year"*. This indicates that the Chinese authorities are striving to show increased leniency towards this high-profile political prisoner, although their basic hard-line policy towards dissent remains the same. The sentence reduction means that her sentence would now end on 3 November 2011, according to information received by TIN.

A second nun in Drapchi, Phuntsog Nyidrol, has also *"shown signs of repentance in recent years"* according to a Chinese official source and in May 2000 her sentence was cut by one year. Phuntsog Nyidrol, who was arrested in 1989 and is serving one of the longest sentences for a political prisoner in Tibet, is now due for release in 2005. The information that has been given to Western governments about Phuntsog Nyidrol's sentence is also inconsistent with details previously recorded by TIN, such as the date of her detention – Beijing recently stated that she was detained in March 1989, while TIN records show a later date of detention of October (her trial was in November 1989). There are also serious concerns for Phuntsog Nyidrol's health; together with other nuns in Drapchi, she was subjected to severe beatings following the May 1998 prison protests even though she was already in poor health and is reportedly extremely debilitated.

The two other nuns, Tenzin Thubten, 32, and Ngawang Choekyi, 33, have been released early, according to confirmed reports received by TIN. Tenzin Thubten was detained in August 1990 and was due for release in August this year. Ngawang Choekyi was detained in March 1992 and due for release in March 2005. Both nuns were imprisoned for peaceful protests, and both suffered severe maltreatment following the May 1998 prison protests. The two women were among a group of 14 nuns, including Ngawang Sangdrol and Phuntsog Nyidrol, who received sentence extensions in 1993 for secretly recording songs on an audio cassette tape expressing their feelings about conditions in prison and conveying a message of hope over despair. The tape was smuggled out of Drapchi and a copy obtained by TIN. No further information is known about the reasons for the two nuns' early release.

(For an English translation of the songs, see http://www.tibetinfo.net/publications/bbp/rukhang_3_songs.htm)

10 See: TIN News Update 15 December 1999, Sentence extensions and shooting incident at Drapchi; confirmation of reprisals for May 1998 protests at: <http://www.tibetinfo.net/news-updates/nu151299.htm> and pages 39-59 of Rukhang 3: The Nuns of Drapchi Prison at http://www.tibetinfo.net/publications/bbp/rukhang_3.htm

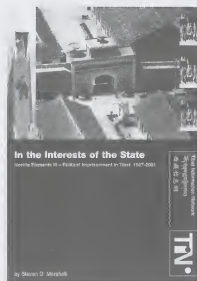
In the Interest of the State. Hostile Elements III – Political Imprisonment in Tibet, 1987-2001

In May 2002, TIN published the third and last volume of its series 'Hostile Elements' written by Steven D. Marshall. The series which started in 1999 offers a comprehensive overview of the phenomenon of political imprisonment in Tibet on the basis of the data collected by TIN's fieldwork teams and processed in TIN's prisoners data base. This third volume attempts to summarise the findings of 14 years of TIN's work in this regard.

The following are two extracts from the book, the volume's summary points and its conclusion.

Summary points

- Although obstacles to information flow prevent TIN from reporting the full extent of political imprisonment in Tibet, according to TIN data the number of current Tibetan political prisoners as of February 2002 has declined to 188. Prisoners being released after completing their sentences outnumber by a wide margin known instances of new political detention. The current level is in comparison to nearly 700 reported in *Cutting Off the Serpent's Head* in 1996 (TIN and Human Rights Watch / Asia), 538 listed in *Hostile Elements* in 1999 and 266 by *Suppressing Dissent* in 2001. Buddhist monks and nuns make up 74 per cent of current prisoners.
- Interpreting the decline of political imprisonment, as well as short and long term implications, must take into account diverse factors. One is the constraining effect of vigorous political and religious repression deployed as political imprisonment reached a peak in 1995-1996. Prisoner numbers began decreasing the following year as campaigns spread throughout Tibetan areas. A second factor is the deterrent posed by severe physical abuse, including beating and torture, meted out to political detainees during investigation and ensuing years of imprisonment. The pace of economic change, particularly in non-farming activity, is a third influence. Officials advocate the pragmatism of pursuing better living standards rather than risking the crushing effects of protest. A fourth element could be the appeal to Tibetans of undertakings that bolster Tibetan language, culture, religion and self-identity but do not chance imprisonment.
- Of 1900 cases of Tibetan political imprisonment since 1987, 41 have resulted in death as the direct consequence of severe maltreatment; political detention has proven fatal for Tibetans at a rate of one in 46. The most pronounced risk is at the TAR Prison Number One (Drapchi) where the rate of death for political prisoners has been one in 28. Female political prisoners at Drapchi have faced the highest level of threat – one in 24 has died. Extreme abuse has caused the death of one in 28 of Drapchi's male political prisoners. Currently the 105 political prisoners remaining at Drapchi have an average sentence of 11 years; one third of their sentences have been extended for further political protest while imprisoned.
- Based on TIN data, 42 per cent of all Tibetan political detainees were sentenced by a court to imprisonment, generally for "counterrevolution" until 1997 and for "endangering state security" thereafter. Sixteen per cent were ordered to serve administrative detention. The portion of current political prisoners serving judicial sentences has risen to 73 per cent as long-serving inmates accumulate and fewer new political detentions occur. The average judicial sentence currently being served is nine years ten months. Five per cent of current prisoners are serving administrative sentences averaging two years ten months.
- Political detention of Tibetans has become more widely dispersed as it has declined. From 1987-1995 detentions of TAR residents (more than 1,300) accounted for 91 per cent of the total during the period; Lhasa prefecture alone accounted for 71 per cent. Only nine per cent resided outside the TAR. But from 1996-2001, even though there were fewer detentions altogether (more than 500), the TAR portion fell to 64 per cent, Lhasa fell to 39 per cent, and the non-TAR portion rose to 36 per cent.



Conclusion

In this report TIN documents the decline of known Tibetan political imprisonment to levels not seen in more than a decade. Not only are the levels of imprisonment in sharp contrast to past years, but so are the efforts by Chinese security to prevent information about political imprisonment from leaving the country. As security apparatus becomes more sophisticated and far-reaching, the successes Tibetans achieved in the early 1990s at sending illuminating information abroad are repeated less often. Tibetans themselves sometimes compromise the authenticity of information. In the quest to be heard in the world of human rights reporting, flawed and exaggerated accounts are becoming common. Together, various negative pressures on the flow and quality of information have made it difficult to know the true scope of political imprisonment in Tibet. While there is little doubt that the trend depicted in this report is representative of the actual situation, the precise numbers provided by TIN inevitably cannot fully reflect the facts.

Chinese sources have also remarked at the decline in the level of political imprisonment in the TAR. According to a commentary in the *Tibet Daily* of 20 May 2001: "Over the past ten years, persons put in jail on charges of threatening state security in the Tibet Autonomous Region in southwest China have become fewer and fewer [...] Statistics show that the [total] number of [judiciously sentenced] prisoners in Tibet accounts for 0.9 per thousand of its total population. This figure is far lower than the nation's average. The recidivism rate over the past ten years has been only four percent, three percent lower than the country's average." According to the article, the reason for the falling rate of opposition to the state is the Tibetan desire "to live a peaceful life". TIN research shows that there is also a darker impetus behind the decline in Tibetan willingness to undertake political risk. In the period since 1987, even though courts have not imposed the death penalty on any Tibetan political protester, TIN records show that about two per cent (one in 46) of all political detentions have resulted in death due to extremes of abuse, none of which are compatible with modern law, governance or penal management.

What is clear from any perspective is that political prisoners are completing their sentences at a rate outstripping the pace at which other Tibetans are following them into prison. The interplay between the divergent factors underlying this may be far reaching in implication. Nothing in the flow of information reaching TIN suggests that Tibetans have become satisfied with Chinese rule and policy, or that they have cast aside conviction in their beliefs – including of the validity of peaceful protest. But while Tibetans know of the preponderance of beating and torture during interrogation, the heavy sentences still being served, the dangerously inadequate health care, and the chance that any political detainee could become one of those who does not survive, it is unlikely that these are the only reasons they are avoiding political imprisonment.

Tibetans living in Tibet are faced with a wider environment greatly changed over the past decade, and barely recognisable compared to 20 years ago. Tibetans, like everyone, enjoy the benefits of rising prosperity and improved infrastructure. Privately, they do not suggest that they find more modern housing, higher income or well-stocked shopping arcades an acceptable trade-off for more cherished aspirations. But neither do they continue to express confidence that political protest will help realise those ambitions. Some Tibetans, chiefly those who are poor, rural, or live in religious institutions, may have become politically paralysed by the apparatus of propaganda, monitoring and intimidation around them. Others, wealthier and more urban, may emulate global trends and immerse themselves in consumerism, a norm encouraged by Chinese social, economic and development policy. But other Tibetans explore their educational, cultural, economic and political environment for opportunities that may not have existed in the political climate of a decade or two ago, or may have been spurned earlier as inadequate. The intense pressures and heightened sense of urgency faced by today's Tibetans – most notably arising from the demographic threat to Tibetan majorities posed by Chinese population influx – may have compelled an unwelcome but unavoidable pragmatism.

At present, roughly 33 Tibetans of each million are held by China as political prisoners. From a human rights and legal perspective, they are a central concern irrespective of their number or the direction of trends. But as willingness to risk political imprisonment declines, the strategies employed by millions of Tibetans in their attempts to cope with Chinese rule while ensuring a Tibetan future, will increasingly inform the study of Tibet and its human rights environment.

The volume 'In the Interest of the State. Hostile Element III – Political Imprisonment in Tibet, 1987-2001' with full analysis and an extensive list of known political prisoners as per spring 2002 can be ordered on TIN's website (www.tibetinfo.net).

TIN NEWS STORY

TIN NEWS UPDATE, 16 AUGUST 2002 (EDITED)

New punishment block at Drapchi Prison

A new cell-block has been built at the Tibet Autonomous Region Prison Number One, Drapchi, to hold prisoners undergoing stricter punishment than the normal regime and new male arrivals. Tagna Jigme Zangpo, the elderly school-teacher who served a total of 32 years in prison before his release on medical parole in March – see in this Chapter p64 – was held in the block for most of his last eight months of detention as a result of a protest he made at Drapchi in August 2001.

Conditions in the block, known as 'Tsonkhul' (Detention Area) Nine, are the harshest in the prison, and inmates held there include two Tibetan criminal prisoners, Tringa and Sonam Tsewang, who were involved in political protests during and after the visit of a United Nations delegation to Drapchi prison in Lhasa in October 1997. Tagna Jigme Zangpo, who was allowed to leave Tibet for medical treatment in July and who arrived in Switzerland on 15 August, told TIN that prisoners are transferred to the block for punishment if they do not give satisfactory responses during 'political investigation' sessions. *"They hold them there for between six months and one year to break their spirit,"* he said.

Tagna Jigme Zangpo, who was first arrested in 1965, was transferred to Detention Area Nine after he staged a noisy one-man protest in August 2001 from within his cell in Detention Area Eight, formerly known as 'New Rukhag (unit or brigade) Five'. Tagna Jigme Zangpo was imprisoned for the third time in September 1983, after having already served 13 years in labour camps, and transferred to Drapchi two years later. His sentence was extended for one-man demonstrations carried out in 1987 and 1991. In August 2001 he began shouting through the bars of his cell, *"Why are you punishing me? I haven't done anything!" "May His Holiness the Dalai Lama live 10,000 years!" "Tibet is independent!"* and *"May Tibet be independent for 10,000 years!"* After his outburst he was transferred to one of the two-person cells that are a feature of Detention Area Nine. Throughout his imprisonment there, a Tibetan criminal prisoner was placed in the cell to act as a monitor.

Detention Area Nine, which appears to have become operational in late summer 2000, has a total of 24 cells. One is used as a storeroom, two are for solitary confinement, and 21 are two-person cells. The two-person cells measure roughly three by three metres. Approximately 30 prisoners are reportedly held in Detention Area Nine at any one time. While some are new arrivals to the prison, the majority, including criminal prisoners, are reportedly undergoing the strict regime in Detention Area Nine as punishment. Prisoners in Detention Area Nine are reportedly not allowed to do any work. A tiny walled courtyard adjoins each cell in the block. Prisoners

under the most severely restricted regime are not given access to that space or allowed any activity or exercise outside their cells. Other prisoners are allowed access to Detention Area Nine's main courtyard that can be used for exercising or jogging. All cells are poorly ventilated; a hole was knocked into the wall of Tagna Jigme Zangpo's cell as a concession to his age and poor health and to ease the suffering caused by his respiratory problems. The inner door is left unlocked in some cells, but not others, preventing some prisoners from being able to access the light switch and darken their cells at night.

Prisoners in Detention Area Nine

Tringa and Sonam Tsewang, the two Tibetans involved in protests associated with the visit of the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention to Drapchi prison on 11 October 1997, were confined to Area Nine in November 2000. They were still being held there when Tagna Jigme Zangpo was released on medical parole to the custody of a relative in Lhasa on 31 March 2002. Tringa, Sonam Tsewang, and a third Tibetan criminal prisoner, Wangdu, were all given extensions of at least three years to their prison sentences following their involvement in the protests connected to the visit.¹¹

Tringa and Sonam Tsewang were each confined in a two-person cell, and were kept confined to those cells. Wangdu is reportedly not being held in Detention Area Nine because he had *"accepted his crime"*. Lodroe Gyatso, a 37-year old member of a dance troupe who was serving a 15-year sentence in Drapchi prison for murder, and whose sentence was extended by six years after he took part in a prison protest in 1995, was also reportedly confined to Detention Area Nine in November 2000. Karma Sonam, another criminal prisoner who took part in a political protest at Drapchi in May 1998, was also confined to Detention Area Nine soon after it opened. The sentence of Karma Sonam, from Kardze (Chinese: Ganzi) in Sichuan province, was reportedly extended after he was involved in initiating a major protest by prisoners at Drapchi on 1 May 1998. Karma Sonam was one of two prisoners to begin the protest by shouting slogans such as *"Free Tibet"* and *"Long live the Dalai Lama"* at a flag-raising ceremony convened by the prison authorities.¹²

11 See TIN News Update 7 October 1998 Sentence Extensions for Tibetans After Political Protest

12 See TIN News Updates 15 December 1999 Sentence extensions and shooting incident at Drapchi and 14 June 2002 New reports on Drapchi prisoners)



Drapchi Prison 2000, viewed from the north.

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Notes based on information received August 2002 ("Detention Area" = "Tsonkhul"; new designations reportedly went into effect around August of 2000)

1. Area 7 (male political; formerly "old rukhag 5")
2. Area 8 (male political; formerly "new rukhag 5")
3. Area 9 (male; opened in 2000; used for all newly arriving prisoners and for punishment)
4. Male work shops (now two-story, incl. carpet making)
5. Areas 4 and 6 (mostly ordinary male criminals)
6. Areas 1 and 2 (mostly ordinary male criminals)
7. Two new cell blocks now built in this area
8. Prison hospital
9. Staff quarters built in this area
10. New facility built in this area for prisoner visits
11. Classroom building
12. Courtyard (site of May 1998 demonstrations)
13. Area 3 (female political, formerly "old rukhag 3")
14. Area 3 (female political, formerly "new rukhag 3")

Two monks, Ngawang Nyima and Ngawang Sungrab, were also transferred to Detention Area Nine in spring 2001 for giving unsatisfactory responses during political investigation sessions, the periodic examinations carried out in prisons to assess whether political prisoners are reforming their political views to comply with those demanded by the authorities. Ngawang Sungrab, a Drepung monk in his mid-thirties from Lhundrub county in Lhasa municipality, was shot and wounded in the abdomen by a prison guard following a protest at the prison on 4 May 1998. Ngawang Sungrab, whose lay name is Dawa Tsering and who was serving a ten-year

sentence, was shot by security personnel stationed at the prison when he was among a group of prisoners who rushed towards some prison gates after the demonstration. Ngawang Sungrab's sentence was extended following the protests in May 1998, and he is reportedly being held in Detention Area Nine for failing to give an acceptable account of his progress in reforming his political views. Ngawang Nyima, a monk from Pema, the county seat of Pashoe county in Chamdo prefecture (Chinese: Changdu), TAR, was also reportedly being kept confined to a cell in Detention Area Nine at the time when Tagna Jigme Zangpo was released from Drapchi.



The new 'Peaceful Liberation' monument in front of the Potala.

©TIN

5 Society and Culture

In Lhasa, the year 2002 was marked by an unprecedented transformation of the cityscape with the consequence that the historic fabric of the Tibetan capital appears more threatened than ever. This is despite its listing as a World Heritage Site and its protection under the UNESCO regulations. In the field of protection and development of the Tibetan language, the new regulations on the Tibetan language promulgated on 22 March 2002 by the TAR People's Congress appear as a mere regression of cultural policies aimed at protecting the Tibetan cultural heritage, especially when compared with those proposed in the 1980s by the Panchen Lama. In addition, the new law falls short of designing a consequent policy supporting the use of the Tibetan language. Under these conditions, Chinese is likely to totally replace Tibetan in public affairs within a few years.

TIN NEWS STORY

TIN NEWS UPDATE, 04 FEBRUARY 2002 (EDITED)

New 'peaceful liberation' monument in Lhasa

A new monument to commemorate the 50th anniversary last year of the 'peaceful liberation' of Tibet has been erected in the Potala Palace Square in Tibet's capital, Lhasa. The 37-metre high structure, which cost 14.6 million yuan (£1,002,199; €1,444,270; \$1.7 million), is intended to be "an abstract representation of Mount Everest". Two 'exhibition halls' are to be constructed beside the monument, according to a plaque in Chinese in the Potala Square. The installation of the monument in such a prominent position in front of the Potala Palace illustrates the authorities' reading of Tibet's 'peaceful liberation' and the importance given by them to convey this reading into the cityscape of the Tibetan capital.

Vice-President Hu Jintao laid the foundation stone for the monument, which is also intended to commemorate China's 'national unity', during his visit to Tibet in July 2001. During the ceremony, Wang Zhaoguo, head of the United Front Work Department of the Chinese Communist Party Central Committee, drew attention to the political significance of the monument. He said: "At this moment in time, we join with all nationalities in Tibet and deeply cherish the strategic policies of the old generation of proletarian revolutionaries such as Mao Zedong, Zhou Enlai, Liu Shaoqi, Zhu De and Deng Xiaoping; in cherishing the memory of the revolutionary martyrs who spilled their blood, gave their youth and even their precious lives for the

peaceful liberation of Tibet; and to all the officers and men of the People's Liberation Army and the working personnel who entered Tibet [...]" (People's Daily, 18 July 2001).

A Tibetan from Lhasa told TIN: "The monument represents the 'peaceful liberation', which for Tibetans was a bad time, so how can Tibetans appreciate a statue like that?" Another Tibetan said: "The Potala was an important place in Lhasa for Tibetans, before it used to be a very beautiful area, with trees and flowers, but now it has been made into a flat square, where there is a Chinese flag. It makes us angry to see this new monument, but we have no means to do anything about it."

TIN NEWS STORY

TIN NEWS UPDATE, 26 FEBRUARY 2002 (EDITED)

New Public Security Bureau building dominates Lhasa townscape

A new 13-storey building is under construction in the Public Security Bureau compound in Lhasa, dominating the skyline of Tibet's capital. It is located on the Lingkor North Avenue, north of the Barkor pilgrimage circuit. The scale of the new Public Security Bureau building, a concrete tower block, and its visibility from all central points of the city, illustrates the notion of 'stability' extolled by the Chinese authorities.



Above: The new PSB building dominates Lhasa's old city.

©TIN

Left: The new PSB building during construction.

©TIN

In traditional Tibetan architecture, the centres of authority occupied the 'higher' places, such as the fortified hilltop site of the Potala Palace, home of the Dalai Lamas. The new modern building, which incorporates no traditional features, is a striking counterpoint to the historical high buildings in the city. The Norwegian architect Amund Sinding-Larsen, co-author of "The Lhasa Atlas; Traditional Tibetan Architecture and Townscape" (Serindia Publications, 2001), said: "Until now, the historical core of Lhasa and its immediate surroundings have been kept largely free of large-scale

modern urban development. This gives Lhasa an added value compared to so many historical urban environments that Lhasa could be compared with in Asia. A bulky tower block in such a prominent position in this ancient city could easily set a damaging precedent for future development in Lhasa. One's main concern would be that of the consequence for the homogeneity and fine grain of the townscape – qualities that must be retained if Lhasa is still to keep its unique magic."

TIN NEWS STORY

TIN SPECIAL REPORT, 10 SEPTEMBER 2002 (EDITED)

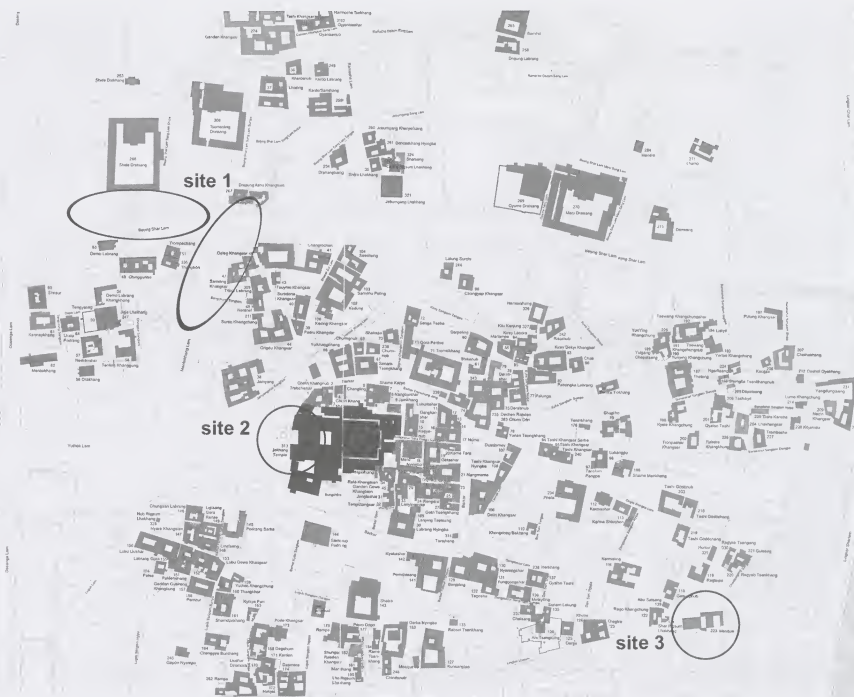
'Rebuilding' and 'Renovation' in Lhasa

Lhasa's traditional urban landscape has undergone significant changes in recent months as a continuing process of demolition and rebuilding in the city's older quarters leads to widespread concerns for the ancient fabric of the Tibetan capital. This report presents a general and pictorial account of these changes, discussing their implications for Lhasa's existing and future townscape and their impact on the Tibetan population in the affected areas. This report also examines the official Chinese media coverage of these transformations and issues concerning how they relate to Lhasa's status as a UNESCO-listed 'world heritage site'.

The on-going transformation of the old areas of Lhasa was announced in the official media at the beginning of 2002. Xinhuanet published an English-language article on 11 January, "Lhasa to improve its old quarters", which stated that "within three years, not only [will] the local residents take some time to recognise their own living quarters, but visitors from far and wide [will] not be able to tell where they are in Lhasa". The article describes the changes to the old city in terms of improving basic infrastructure, asserting that with planned improvements to gutters, installation of a drainage system and the resurfacing of roads, the "stale smell of the living quarters in old town of Lhasa" will disappear. The article continues: "The litter of daily life will also disappear after the local residents have

changed their habits to gather litter and put it in proper places". As this somewhat crudely suggests, the old areas of Lhasa are predominantly occupied by local Tibetans, and are the last areas of concentrated Tibetan residences in the city. The growing Chinese population, already the majority in Lhasa, generally lives in the newer areas of the city built since the 1960s.

The article emphasises that the transformation of Lhasa's old quarter is not a process of destruction, but one of "rebuilding", stating that "the old living quarters will be repaired and refurbished", and "the most attractive Tibetan style of construction will still be there for all to see and admire".



The old city of Lhasa with the three sites mentioned in this report.

©Larsen&Sindig-Larsen/TIN

Sites

Given the extent of the urban transformation that has taken place in Lhasa over the course of this year, rather than attempting a complete overview of these changes, this report focuses mainly on the example of three particular sites. These sites have been chosen either due to the scale of the transformations and the gravity of their long-term implications or due to their particular significance from a conservation point of view.

Site 1: TIN reported on 29 April 2002 the destruction of a traditional building complex situated on the corner of Dekyi Shar Lam (Chinese: Beijing Dong Lu) and Mentsikhang Lam (Ch: Zanggiyuan Lu; see TIN News Update 29 April 2002 Further demolitions of historic buildings in Lhasa). By early summer, four blocks situated between the Yabshi Phunkhang (the house of the 11th Dalai Lama) and the Tashi Togay Hotel (Zanggiyuan Lu 8) were completely demolished. The same demolition project



Demolition work around the Yabshi Phunkhang, house of the 11th Dalai Lama's family. ©TIN



also targeted another 4 blocks on the other side of Dekyi Shar Lam adjacent to the Zhide Datsang (a monastic complex belonging to Sera monastery), leaving a vast area bare. Local residents were reportedly informed that other blocks further east along Dekyi Shar Lam have been marked for demolition next year.



Demolition next to the Zhide Datsang.

©TIN

Site 2: In early April, Radio Lhasa announced that the "thousands of traditional butter lamps which burn in the Jokhang [temple] constitute a danger to the building". Later that same month, a construction site with hoardings was erected in front of the Jokhang between two large incense burners (Tib: Sangthab) which bore the following slogan in Chinese and Tibetan:

"Removing the causes of the risk of fire, [we] must protect cultural heritage and artefacts. Invisible factors are far more dangerous than the visible fire. Removing obstacles is greater [nobler] than creating obstacles. [Our] responsibility is heavier than the Mt Everest" (translated from the Tibetan).

On 11 June a short article in the China Daily reiterated: "Thousands of lamps, which have burned for thousands of years, are now moved from Jokhang Monastery into a special lamp house. This house, which cost 210,000 RMB [approx. €21,700/US\$25,600; GB£16,154], was invested by the government in order to protect cultural relics in the Jokhang Monastery". Further announcements about plans to step up electrification work in the temple itself led to assumptions that there would be a prohibition on naked flames inside the building, although these now appear to be ill-founded as small numbers of butter lamps are apparently still permitted to be burned.

The 'special lamp house' was completed in late summer 2002, and comprised of a sunken building approximately eight by ten metres, reportedly intended for use only when



The 'special lamp house' in front of the Jokhang.

©TIN

large numbers of butter lamps were to be lit during festivals and special offerings. Tibetan devotees consider such offerings made in the precinct of the Jokhang, the most sacred temple in Tibet, as particularly auspicious. On occasions when luck is particularly sought, for instance before a relative marries or when a family member is ill, individuals sponsor the lighting of large numbers of butter lamps. Potentially, such offerings, which may include several thousand butter lamps (sometimes a multiple of the sacred number 108), do present an obvious fire risk. Indeed, in the past there have been incidents of major fires in several important historic buildings started by the open flames of butter lamps. In the Jokhang itself, security measures such as the availability of fire extinguishers close to the many different altars have therefore been the rule for years.

Site 3: A further zone of transformation is located in the south-east of the historical city just outside the Lingkhör (Lingkhör Lho Lam)¹. This part of the town was traditionally the quarter for Tibetan Muslims of Chinese origin (Tib: Hopaling, a Tibetan branch of the Chinese Muslims (Hui) whose main region of origin is in today's Gansu province). In this area the highly distinctive



The new mosque at the south-east end of the Lingkhör

©Max Cotton

Gyalhakang, the traditional old mosque of the Hopaling Muslims has been destroyed. In its place a much larger new mosque has been constructed, a rather bulky concrete structure the facade of which features a much more Tibetan style of sacral construction surmounted with a modern 'trans-Islamic' dome and two minarets. Pillars and lintels made of concrete bear architectural flourishes in the style of a Tibetan temple. The old mosque in contrast was a unique historical monument marrying Tibetan, Chinese and central Asian Islamic features.

Social impact

The recent and current destruction and reconstruction of buildings has a direct impact on those living in zone 1, in the old city centre of Lhasa, which is inhabited almost exclusively by Tibetans. Apart from the official explanation of 'raising the quality' of the housing and urban infrastructure (see above), it appears that the destruction of the houses in site 1 and their eventual reconstruction will generate a considerable increase in rental area. The reconstructed buildings add a further storey to the usual two plus the ground floor of the pre-existing structures, which will automatically raise the rental income of Lhasa municipality, which owns most of these houses, by 25 per cent. Rental income is likely to rise further because rents in the emerging new buildings are expected to be much higher.

The destruction of the old houses came as a surprise to most tenants as well as to the owners of the houses which were privately owned. Businesses and residents were given only ten days notice to vacate the properties, and there was no procedure in place to make a formal appeal. Tenants from a building close to the Yak Hotel were relocated to other areas within Lhasa. Others were not provided with any alternative temporary dwellings. It is likely that many of the old tenants will not be able to pay the higher rents in the new constructions, as many families living in the old quarter of Lhasa are relatively poor. It is likely, therefore, that most will be compelled to relocate into Lhasa's suburbs or beyond, leaving behind an environment that suited them and the existence of which was beneficial to the continuation of Tibetan culture.

Owners of the demolished buildings were bought out at a fixed price; unconfirmed reports suggest around 20,000 – 25,000 RMB (approx. €2,583/US\$2,450 – 3,050; GB£1,540 – 1,900) was offered as compensation. The original owners were told that they could re-purchase their re-constructed home, though at a highly inflated price. Several shop owners reported that the municipality intends to offer them their previous shops for 170,000 RMB (approx. €17,565/US\$20,700; GB£13,000), around seventeen times the price paid several years ago. Before moving out, some owners demanded a guarantee that they would be able to move back into their homes. TIN has

1. The traditional circumambulation path around the historic centre of Lhasa.



not been able to establish whether such guarantees were given. Furthermore, previous cases have shown that despite being given guarantees, original home owners still may be pushed aside in favour of new owners, often relatives, friends or business-partners of constructors or municipality cadres. Whilst there is no confirmation of open confrontations, some people reportedly refused to leave their homes until finally compelled to do so.

Tenants were allegedly not permitted to take wooden beams from the destroyed houses, which were not needed for the new concrete frame constructions. Wood is an

expensive construction material in central Tibet, from which the expropriated owners might have gained a significant sum to supplement the compensation they received. Some sources indicate that instead of being given to the private house owners, the wood was claimed by construction companies and municipality cadres.

Although quite a few of the buildings destroyed were unquestionably in need of refurbishment and mostly did not feature modern facilities, there are serious concerns about the quality of the new structures under construction. In the recent past, new houses, although expensive to buy,



were constructed in a cheap manner and turned out to provide poor quality living conditions with poor plumbing. Lighting and ventilation, where available, were also deficient.

One further concern is the structural safety of the new buildings. One justification given for the need for new structures is a law stating that all buildings with wooden pillars are unsafe and need to be replaced by thin-walled concrete frame structures with concrete slab ceilings. However, according to construction experts, it is precisely this kind of construction that is particularly prone to damage during earthquakes. This is especially the case since the concrete used is often of low quality, and in order to spare material costs and construction time, the steel reinforcements within the concrete are often reduced to a minimum. In Lhasa, many historical buildings that have withstood earthquakes for the last several hundred years have been replaced with buildings that have not been proven to be earthquake proof. This has been a common practice throughout China, but especially so in Lhasa. An expert in construction told TIN that the extra storey added to the new houses now in construction in site 1 is likely to make them less able to resist earthquakes than the previous structures.

A further implication of the destruction and reconstruction of buildings in the old city is that as the authorities reallocate homes, the opportunity arises for them to screen those applying for accommodation. All candidates for housing must be people with local residential permits, and the size of their families should match the official restrictions. Many of the former inhabitants of the now destroyed houses came to Lhasa from the surrounding countryside or eastern Tibet and therefore do not have local ration cards which would entitle them to basic amenities and services. Although individuals and families with 'back door' connections can evade such extra costs, anyone without official contacts is subject to a variety of expenses and fees – official and unofficial – usually not affordable for those from rural areas.

In short, the transformations to site 1 are clearly detrimental to the buildings' previous tenants and owners, the vast majority of whom are Tibetan. From an economic point of view, the previous private owners face a loss which only a few are likely to be able to recoup in the foreseeable future, and with the expected increase in rents, most of the previous tenants are unlikely to be able to afford their residences when rebuilt. Moreover, the supposed improvement in the quality of living conditions in the new houses that the authorities have presented as a justification for the entire project are far from certain.

These transformations are likely to marginalise Lhasa's poorest inhabitants as well as erode the last homogeneous

cluster of Tibetan settlement in Lhasa. The winners of this transformation of the city will be the municipality of Lhasa and those related to it. The municipality will gain better control of an area which in the recent past was the most politically sensitive in the city, at the same time as increasing its income from rents and fees. Another sector making significant gains from the transformations in Lhasa is the construction industry. Observers have noted an ever-closer relationship between local politicians and building contractors, with particularly influential families involved in both.

Impact on the cityscape

The traditional streets and houses that have been destroyed for the 'modernisation' in zone 1 were not particularly ancient. Most of them were built in the 1970s and early 1980s, but were largely built with traditional materials and were very well adapted to the historic style of the old town centre. The blocks now destroyed belonged to a 'buffer zone' proposed by the State Party and approved by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) as an appropriate context for the few remaining truly historical buildings of Lhasa, and in particular for the Jokhang, which together with the Potala Palace and Norbulingka, (the summer residence of the Dalai Lama,) has been classified as a World Heritage Site.



New and old.

©Max Cotton

The new buildings, in contrast, are bulky structures that do not feature traditional Tibetan characteristics such as massive entrance doors, window lintels and balconies, although their outer walls, which are mostly made of stone, give them good insulation. In order to give them a 'Tibetan look', parts of the facades are painted with often crudely imitated traditional motifs. In other parts of the town, historic structures of more than 100 years old are being replaced by new buildings that do not attempt to feature even these cosmetic traditional characteristics. Instead, stone walls are being replaced by tiled concrete walls and windows are being made with metal frames and blue tinted glass, both of which are characteristic of contemporary architecture in Sichuan from where contractors in Tibet are supplied with modern construction materials. Leaving aside aesthetic considerations, although such features might be well adapted to the climatic conditions of lowland Sichuan, they are completely inappropriate in Tibet where protection against cold and the maximum use of sunlight and warmth are a necessity. Conservationists and construction experts therefore fear that the houses to be constructed in site 1 might also be built in this style.



Pseudo-Tibetan style.

©TIN

The new structure for burning the lamps, however, does jeopardise the traditional character of the surroundings of the Jokhang. As with the new buildings of site 1, the construction is basically a bulky oblong concrete structure that does not bear much resemblance to traditional Tibetan architecture. As with the new buildings in site 1, it was 'made Tibetan' by painting it white and adding a frieze along the top of the wall, intended to resemble the typical outward appearance of a Tibetan monastery. The new structure was built against the Jowo Utha, a sacred walled perimeter containing a tree which Tibetans believe to have grown out of a hair of the historical Buddha, as well as a dedication stone remembering a major donation to the Jokhang temple by a Manchu emperor. In order to clear a space for the new structure, the reconstructed historical western wall of the perimeter was destroyed.² Thus, apart from some superficial attempts to blend in with traditional Tibetan style, this new structure can be seen to disrupt and to some extent destroy the historical context in which it has been placed. Demolition of the wall adds to the destruction of the Jokhang precincts carried out in the 1980s when most houses in front of the temple were destroyed and replaced by new buildings and a large plaza which now faces the west of the complex.



Sinification of the cityscape.

©TIN

As far as site 2 is concerned, the new construction for butter lamps in front of the Jokhang is in itself congruent with the practice of Tibetan religion. Since restrictions on religious activities were eased in the early 1980s, the authorities responded to the growing popularity of burning butter lamps by opening the so-called 'wood-court' (Tib: Shingra) in which additional tables were laid out for butter lamps. Traditionally, this wood-court, which is adjacent to the main temple in the Jokhang complex, is where wood for firing the giant butter-tea cauldrons in the course of major festivals was stored. This re-contextualisation of the 'wood-court' altered neither the general function of the Jokhang complex (since the old utilization had become obsolete) nor its appearance, since no transformation of the building was necessary for the new utilization.

In the case of site 3, the destruction of the historic Gyalhakang mosque is a clear loss for Lhasa's historic and cultural heritage. The reconstruction of a new mosque cannot be considered an appropriate replacement from the point of view of the protection of historical monuments. Its 'trans-Islamic' elements and its pseudo-'Tibetan' features might illustrate the 'unity of the nationalities in Tibet' much quoted in the state controlled press, but they are in fact a mere disfiguration of Lhasa's historical heritage. The value of the old mosque lay not just in the fact that it was ancient, but in that its specific design reflected the cosmopolitan character of old Lhasa and the history of the local Tibetan Muslims.³

2. This wall had been previously destroyed once before the 1980s, but was reconstructed in the style of its historical model after the Jokhang resumed its religious function.



Cheaply-built new housing.

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It appears, therefore, that the transformations currently taking place in Lhasa involve an understanding of 'modernisation', which clearly clashes with the preservation of Tibetan cultural heritage. This 'modernisation' does not involve refurbishing the existing Tibetan structures in keeping with their original style or providing residents with necessary improvements in living standards – let alone the desired amenities and comforts of modern life. Rather, the current transformation of the Tibetan capital involves a pattern of destruction with relatively poor subsequent reconstruction and with superficial, merely cosmetic 'Tibetanisation' of the emerging structures. In this way, the current transformation drive appears to be an impoverishment of the Tibetan capital and its cultural heritage, while the benefits to the local community at large seem to be at best minimal. It must be noted that developments such as the above are currently occurring in a similar manner in Tibetan towns other than Lhasa.

Further transformations

The transformations in Lhasa are not limited to the area strictly within the precinct of the old city centre. In the past months, new structures have emerged in its close proximity, which have also contributed to a gradual disfiguring of the Tibetan capital.

In the course of the year, a 13-storey building accommodating the central office of the Public Security Bureau (PSB), the major security force in the TAR, has become a new focal point of Lhasa's skyline, distorting its specific townscape.

In spring 2002, a massive concrete monument dedicated to the 'peaceful liberation of Tibet' was also inaugurated in

front of the Potala Palace. The location of the new structure (which is meant to represent the 'unity of all nationalities') in front of the palace is highly symbolic: other historical monuments, a pillar of over 1,000 years old with the text of a treaty between the then Tibetan empire and China and two pagoda-style pavilions covering engraved stone tablets, were installed here by Manchu emperors. The new and the ancient monuments document the long history of political contacts and tensions between Tibet and China. A further symbolic dimension of this new monument is that it is set between the Potala, the main seat of the Dalai Lamas, and the seat of the current government of the TAR, symbolising both the past and present political fate of Tibet. Like the new PSB-building, the monument has become a focal point in this part of the Tibetan capital.

Aside from the PSB building and the 'peaceful liberation' monument, a series of other smaller monuments have also appeared in Lhasa, often in incongruous styles and locations. For example, a monument dedicated to tourism is set close to the Potala and features a purely Chinese-modernistic style. The tourism department has also 'planted' rows of plastic palm trees in an attempt to further embellish the area.

Historical site protection and UNESCO

International conservation experts and urban developers are alarmed at the failure of the Chinese authorities to apply internationally agreed standards of protection to the cultural heritage of Lhasa. The Potala palace was added to UNESCO's World Cultural Heritage list in 1994, the Jokhang in late 2000 and the Norbulingka area in December 2001; collectively they are listed as 'Historic Ensemble of the Potala palace, Lhasa'. The violation of standards of protection for the Potala and the Barkhor area as agreed by China with UNESCO has been a particular matter of concern. In addition to the destruction of historical buildings, and the failure to take the 'buffer zone' into consideration as documented above in relation to site 1, the Chinese authorities have also failed in their duty to keep the UN agency informed of proposed transformations. Article 56 of the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention states: *'The World Heritage Committee invites the States Parties to inform the Committee, through the UNESCO Secretariat, of their intention to undertake or to authorise in an area protected under the Convention major restorations or new constructions which may affect the World Heritage value of the property. Notice should be given as soon as possible, (for instance, before drafting basic documents for*

3. They were two groups of Tibetan Muslims in old Tibet, the Hopaling and the Lhasa Kache. The Gyalhakang was the mosque of the Hopaling, a Tibetan branch of Chinese Muslims (Hui). The Lhasa Kache were the descendants of Muslim traders mainly from Ladakh, Kashmir and Turkestan (particularly the city of Kashgar) who had taken Buddhist wives in Lhasa. Though a small community, the Lhasa Kache played a crucial role in Tibet's trade relations with the outside world. After 1959, they were placed under arrest because most of them had demanded an Indian passport, to which they were entitled by the Sino-Indian treaty of 1954, in order to escape from Tibet. After their release in the early sixties, the vast majority of them emigrated to Kashmir and the Middle-East. During the 1950s and particularly after 1959, the Hopalings were classified by the Chinese state as Chinese Muslims (Hui), although after several centuries in Tibet their culture had changed a lot. This and the strong immigration of Hui from Gansu led to the factual disparition of the Hopaling. Today, the relationship between Tibetans and Hui in many parts of Tibet is notoriously bad.



Tourism monument.

©ICT



Plastic palm tree in the streets of Lhasa.

©TIN



The 'Peaceful Liberation' monument.
©TIN



The 'Snow Pearl' tower.

©Zonda



The 'Dutch village' in Lhasa

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Side view of the new Mosque.

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specific projects,) and before making any decisions that would be difficult to reverse, so that the World Heritage Committee may assist in seeking appropriate solutions to ensure that the World Heritage value of the site is fully preserved."

Even before the current year's transformations as described above, UNESCO's World Heritage Committee had demonstrated some concern. The report of the 25th session of the World Heritage Committee, held in Helsinki, Finland, on 11 – 16 December 2001, noted: "[B]ecause of development pressures in the city of Lhasa, particular attention [should] be given to the mitigation of the changes in the areas surrounding the World Heritage properties". Apparently alarmed by the impetus of developments in Lhasa, the World Heritage Committee discussed the situation in the Tibetan capital once again during its 26th session held between 24 – 29 June 2002 in Budapest, Hungary. While the actual deliberations of the Committee are confidential, the Chinese authorities are known to have reacted to the cases of inappropriate transformations put forward by UNESCO by citing legal minutia within the agreement. For instance the vice-mayor of Lhasa, Lobsang Tenzin, who attended the meeting, reportedly explained that the PSB-building had been built prior to the extension of the World Heritage protected area to include the Barkhor area. However, this is only partially true since the building was completed in 2002. In the case of the 'liberation monument' in front of the Potala palace, it was pointed out that the monument was constructed just beyond the border of the protected perimeter. In both cases, the Chinese authorities can therefore claim to be demonstrating a strict application of UNESCO standards without showing much regard for its spirit.

As stated, the World Heritage Committee's discussions on this subject are confidential. However, the Committee has requested that a joint UNESCO – ICOMOS "reactive monitoring mission" be sent "to examine the state of

conservation of the property and to undertake consultations with the site management authorities" before the 27th session of the World Heritage Committee, to take place in June/July 2003, which is to consider the report of the mission.⁴ This indicates that the Committee was not satisfied with the explanations given by the Chinese delegations to the Helsinki and Budapest meetings.

Propaganda

Meanwhile, the state-controlled press in China started an intensive propaganda campaign ostensibly aimed at responding to growing international criticism of the 'modernisation' of the Tibetan capital, which reached a crescendo during June and July 2002. For example, the second paragraph of an article dated 23 July, which discusses ancient Tibetan buildings, commences: "Responding to some recent rumours abroad about the transformation [gaizao] works in Lhasa's old quarter (...)"⁵.

Articles on the 'reconstruction' works were published on websites and in newspapers, including the Tibet Daily, Tibet Commercial Newspaper and People's Daily overseas edition. Xinhua was responsible for the majority of those articles. In addition, a press conference was held by Lhasa City, reported in the Tibet Daily of 28 June 2002, just after the UNESCO conference in Budapest (see above). The first relevant piece cited by the tibetinfo.com website, in its section on "Reformation of Lhasa's old city", is dated 16 June (taken from the Tibet Daily). Only a few short pieces on the subject appear to have been published between this date and 22 July, when a long piece was published by Xinhua entitled "Circumstances of the transformation [gaizao] and improvement in Lhasa's old city: Inhabitants will have flush toilets for the first time". Then, from 23 to 26 July, some three to six relevant medium or long articles were published each day. Most were by Xinhua correspondents in Lhasa. After 26 July, the flow of articles slowed considerably, with few or no relevant articles found for the month of August; two lengthy pieces then appeared

4. See UNESCO's website, www.unesco.org

5. "Lhasa old city carries out repairs and transformation", op cit.

at the beginning of September. Perhaps inevitably, articles in English were fewer in number than articles in Chinese.

It is notable that in the English articles, the word 'renovation' is used almost without exception for the process being carried out. 'Renovation' as a term would imply renewal or repair of an existing building more readily than 'reconstruction' – the predominant use of the former term in English may well be deliberate. By contrast, in the Chinese-language articles a much wider variety of terms are used. *Gaijian* (used frequently) means rebuilding or reconstruction, whereas *weixiu* is normally translated as maintenance, upkeep, keeping in good repair – referring perhaps to the repairing of old buildings rather than knocking them down and rebuilding. *Gaizao* is the Chinese term translated as 'transformation' – it also has the meaning of to reform or recreate. It is not usually clear whether this would refer to rebuilding or more minor repair works. The overall impression gained from the Chinese language propaganda is of an exercise combining destruction/reconstruction with some repair work, whereas the English language pieces give a rather hazier impression of 'renovation' works.

As to the nature of the propaganda, there seem to be essentially two lines of argument about the reconstruction work. The first relates to the issue of whether or not the relevant area or buildings are under protection as a world heritage site. The second relates to the wishes of local Tibetans about their living conditions. Each is discussed, with reference to particular articles, below.

As discussed above, while many of the traditional-style residences around the Jokhang that are now being 'renovated' were built in the 1970s and 1980s, they were well adapted to the traditional style of the old town and were built using traditional materials, helping them match the few remaining historical buildings. These residences therefore formed part of a 'buffer zone' as proposed by the State Party and approved by UNESCO as an appropriate context for the few remaining truly historic buildings including the Jokhang. The arguments made by the propagandists essentially avoid this point altogether. In several of the articles, a very clear distinction is made between the adjectives *gu* (used for ancient, archaic, historic, age-old) and *lao* ('old') as contrasted with 'new', but generally used for things not so old as *gu* as in *lao chengshi*, old city. The implication is that items described as *gu* are to be protected, but *lao* items are not necessarily to be protected. For example, an article published on 23

July⁶ quotes Guo Bao, head of Lhasa City's cultural artefacts protection bureau: *"The repairs [weixiu] and transformations [gaizao] are in order to better protect the ancient [gu] buildings, and there have been no instances of the ancient [gu] Tibetan-style buildings being damaged"*.

In the same article, Guo Bao defines buildings in the old quarter as *"old buildings with Tibetan characteristics" [you zangzu tese de lao jianzhu]* – he adds that *"As some are old and some new [yinwei niandai you chang you duan], they cannot all be called 'ancient buildings', and moreover this would be inconsistent with the standard definition of 'World Cultural Heritage' [shijie wenhua yichan]"*. 'Living Buddha' (the Chinese expression for incarnated lamas) Bomi Qambalozhub is also quoted in a different article⁷ as saying that much of the *"old city"* was built in the 20th century.

An admission that demolitions have been carried out was made in an article dated 23 July⁸ by Yangpei, the Tibetan foreman of the project and head of Lhasa city construction bureau. He reportedly said: *"We have demolished a few buildings, but these buildings were constructed recently and were modern buildings that did not fit in with the ancient buildings. This was carried out in accordance with suggestions from experts at World Cultural Heritage."* He continued, *"In relation to a few ancient buildings which were in a dangerous state such as being close to collapse, we employed companies that specialise in Tibetan-style building construction to carry out maintenance work [weixiu], and those engineers have a detailed knowledge of Tibetan-style construction"*. However, it is not clear which 'ancient buildings' Mr. Yangpei is referring to.

Another rather defensive remark refers to the reportedly small area of impact: the area concerned by this reconstruction project is said to occupy *"only"* 5.4 per cent of the (130 hectare) area of the old city.⁹ The same article states: *"The repairs to important ancient buildings will be carried out strictly according to traditional methods, using mud and sandstone [shashi], exactly the same as 'akatu' in the past"*. This statement, of course, refers only to 'ancient' buildings.

Several propaganda pieces attempt to divert attention from the nature of the work by quantification of the levels of investment that have been and are being made by the government. An English language article of 23 July¹⁰ states: *"Since 1979, the central government has allocated over 300m yuan [approx. €31m/US\$36m; GB£22m] to renovate buildings in downtown Lhasa and preserve their*

6. "Lhasa old city carries out repairs and transformation", op cit.

7. "Living Buddha says that reformation of the old city will benefit the Jokhang temple", Xinhua, Lhasa, in Chinese, 24 July.

8. "Lhasa old city carries out repairs and transformation" op cit.

9. "Living Buddha says that reformation of the old city will benefit the Jokhang temple", op cit.

10. "1,000 year old street in Lhasa retains original look", Xinhuanet, 23 July 2002.

original style"¹¹. Another article states that the government is now investing 70m RMB (€7,232,484/US\$8.5m; GB£5.4m) in repairs and transformation of 56 courtyards in the old city, of which four are on the city's protection list.¹²

The mainstay of official arguments for carrying out these works is that the existing residences are essentially outdated and unsafe. A piece published on 24 July¹³ reports the chairman of Lhasa City People's Congress, Tashi Dhundup, indirectly as saying *"Many of the residences in Lhasa's old quarter are built of wood and earth, and especially on the ground floor, they are dark and damp. More than 90 per cent of the walls are cracked, and much of the wood has woodworm. In the rainy season, the buildings become even more dangerous, directly threatening the safety of the masses that live there"*. He was quoted as saying: *"The aim of maintenance and transformation [weixiu gaizao] is very clear: to eliminate the danger from houses in the old quarter, and to better protect ancient buildings in the old quarter"*.

In an article dated 30 July, "Explaining the Real Picture to the World", 'Living Buddha' Lobsang Tenzin, deputy mayor of Lhasa and responsible for the standing committee of the Lhasa city reconstruction and maintenance project, is quoted as saying that after 50 years of development, Lhasa people's living standards have been raised: *"[T]hey are no longer satisfied with living in dark, damp houses, and they are making pressing demands on the government to invest in improving their housing conditions"*¹⁴.

The authorities appear to have been keen to demonstrate that local Tibetans supported the reconstruction process. According to an article dated 24 July, a survey of more than one thousand households was conducted.¹⁵ The article summarises: *"The survey shows that the repair and transformation works currently being carried out in Lhasa old city correspond to the wishes of the residents"*. Only small criticisms are referred to, for example that work teams have been urging residents to leave so that work can be carried out promptly. Danba, a resident, commented: *"This survey ... was necessary for letting residents' voices be heard by the government through the people's congress. As a representative of our courtyard, I thoroughly reflected the opinions of everyone"*. Although the authorities seem to have felt that conducting a survey is a worthwhile exercise in order to be able to demonstrate that the masses are happy, there are some questions to be

raised about the procedure. As the survey had been carried out only *"in recent days"*, it clearly did not form part of the decision-making process. Furthermore, the survey was not anonymous – names and addresses were required – and it was conducted through the neighbourhood committees/people's congress. The press report does not deal with what type of building is superseding the older residences and whether residents consider it satisfactory. The questionnaire apparently asked specifically about the construction of public flush toilets and residents were also able to clearly express a desire for individual kitchens. As these are features that would necessitate redesign of the building, one wonders whether the questionnaire may have been loaded towards particular answers. As in other similar cases, the reliability of evidence obtained from a survey where anonymity is impossible, where work has already commenced, and where the authorities clearly require a particular set of answers, has to be subject to question.

On a more general note, Tashi Dhundup, chairman of the Lhasa people's congress, was reported on 23 July as saying that the government had solicited suggestions from the residents, and *"the final confirmed reconstruction principles were the 'two musts' [liangge bixu] and the 'two must not changes' [liangge bu neng bian]*. *That is, the municipal administration's [lao chengqu de shi zheng jichu sheshi] basic infrastructure must be transformed, and the traditional buildings' internal infrastructure must be transformed; the overall layout of streets and lanes in the old quarter must not change, and the appearance of ancient buildings [gu jianzhu] with historical value must not change"*.¹⁶ This is less than reassuring, given that transformation of internal infrastructure is considered *"necessary"*, and only the need to maintain the *"appearance"* of ancient buildings with historical value is mentioned.

In both the Chinese and English language articles, use is made of quoting the words of ordinary local Tibetans. *"Bandain"*, aged 73, is quoted in an article published on Xinhuanet on 23 July (*"1,000 year old street in Lhasa retains original look"*) as saying *"Actually, most buildings along Barkhor Street have remained unchanged... Barkhor Street is still the same old street, except that it's cleaner and has got more shops"*. At another end of the spectrum two 'Living Buddhas' are also quoted. The eighty-five year old Bomi Qambalozhub is cited in one article¹⁷ dated 24 July as saying: *"Buddhism values human life, and its*

11. A Chinese language article in similar terms, dated 16 June "Ancient buildings certainly will be as they were" [*gu jianzhu 'yiran ru jiu'*], adds *"(...) including large quantities of gold, silver and other materials, used to repair and preserve Tibet's ancient buildings"*.

12. "Investment of 70m yuan Specialist opinion of repairs and transformation in Lhasa old city" Xinhua, Lhasa, in Chinese, 24 July 2002.

13. "Survey makes clear: Repair and transformation of Lhasa's old city is in accordance with the wishes of the Tibetan residents", Xinhua, Lhasa, in Chinese, 24 July 2002.

14. "Explaining the Truth to the World", Xinhua, Lhasa, 30 July 2002.

15. "Survey makes clear..." op cit.

16. "Lhasa city carries out repairs and transformation", op cit.

17. "Living Buddha says the reformation of the old city will benefit the Jokhang temple"



Today's Lhasa as seen from the Potala, facing south.

©TIN

purpose is delivering all living creatures from torment. Carrying out repairs to the dangerous houses that are threatening people's lives is to protect people's lives, which is completely consistent with Buddhist doctrine".

On a more political note, 'Living Buddha' Lobsang Tenzin, deputy leader of the Lhasa old quarter reconstruction and maintenance project and deputy mayor of Lhasa, is quoted as saying: "We have received many letters from abroad, asking for an explanation of the transformation [gaizao] of Lhasa old city. Although the signatures on the letters are not the same, the content is basically identical; this makes clear that they are the work of a small number of people. There are some people who do not want to see improvements to the standard of living of the Lhasa masses, and do not want to see the people [laobaixing] living in spacious, safe houses".¹⁸ This attributes a heavy political significance to any protest or questioning from abroad about the reconstruction works.

As mentioned, few articles on this subject were published in August. However, the appearance of two lengthy articles in Chinese at the start of September indicates that for the authorities, the transformation work in Lhasa is still very much a 'live' propaganda issue. While the two articles tend to reiterate arguments made in earlier pieces, "Renovate the old in the old style: Lhasa says goodbye to dangerous housing"¹⁹, published 2 September, comments briefly on compliance of the works with World Cultural Heritage standards: "When the Jokhang [temple] was entered into the World Cultural Heritage [list] it accorded with all six World Cultural Heritage standards."²⁰ Of these, the transformation of the old city touches on standard no. 5, but the other standards certainly are not affected, and moreover the structure of the Jokhang itself certainly will not suffer any damage..." Another piece, entitled "Further clear proof about the protection of Tibet's ancient [gula] culture: saving Lhasa's old quarter",²¹ states: "Recently, abroad,

18. "Explaining the Truth to the World", Xinhua, Lhasa, 30 July 2002.

19. Tibet Science and Technology News, 2 September, and on www.tibetinfo.com.

20. Article 1 of the World Heritage Convention defines the outstanding universal value of cultural properties. Article 1 is interpreted by the World Heritage Committee by using the criteria for cultural property set out in paragraph 24 of the Operational Guidelines of the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention. The writer of this article may be referring to the six criteria set out in paragraph 24(a), the fifth of which reads: "an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement or land-use which is representative of a culture (or cultures), especially when it has become vulnerable under the impact of irreversible change." See UNESCO's web-site, www.unesco.org.

21. Published on Xinhuanet, 4 September 2002, and on www.tibetinfo.com.



some persons who do not understand the true situation have created a seething mass of speculation; even vilifying the Chinese government as destroying ancient Tibetan buildings, sowing 'theories on the destruction of Tibetan culture', and a few persons with ulterior motives have even used the 26th Session of the World Heritage Committee to launch an attack...". Clearly, the authorities remain keen to rebut any suggestion that World Cultural Heritage standards are not being adhered to.

Conclusion

This report has highlighted that Lhasa in 2002 has faced a faster transformation than ever before. It appears that while these transformations are being justified by what is indisputably a genuine need of the people of Lhasa for modernisation of the city, the transformations seem unlikely to bring benefit to the majority of the city's residents. In the short term at least, these changes to the city result in economic loss and social damage for most of the Tibetans concerned. From the point of view of the preservation of the local cultural heritage, there is a de facto step back from the progress that had been made a few years ago²² to a policy of 'modernisation' at all cost. If

respect is being paid to the unique character of Lhasa at all now, it is mostly through symbolic and superficial measures, which are clearly inconsistent with internationally accepted standards. The protection offered to most parts of historic Lhasa by being declared World Heritage Sites by UNESCO has not so far been able to avert this on-going development. International experts seriously doubt that the planned fact-finding mission to be sent by UNESCO to Lhasa will be able to do anything but monitor irrevocable damage. While UNESCO could theoretically withdraw Lhasa's status of World Heritage Site for transgression of the rules bound to its declaration, it is unlikely that such a potentially confrontational measure will be taken.

The people benefiting from the current transformation of Lhasa are the local elites who form a coalition of political and economic power. While the Chinese central government has in the past signalled a willingness to take serious measures for the protection of Tibet's cultural heritage, and has also asserted that the local elites in the TAR will not be allowed rule without Beijing's consent, there is no sign so far that China is actually taking any real

22. On the 20th July 2000, the local Government produced a public circular entitled, "Resolutions on the protection of the residency rights of local Tibetans in the ancient heritage buildings of Lhasa Municipality". That was the first clear cut policy document outlining the Government's determination to protect and safeguard the residential buildings which had cultural heritage value.

steps to protect Lhasa's cultural heritage. Foreign initiatives, which have attempted to undertake state-of-the-art renovation work in Lhasa while improving the living conditions of the population concerned, have in recent years been evicted from Lhasa. One such example is the international NGO Tibet Heritage Fund.

The TAR Tenth Five Year Plan declared that Lhasa is to be developed into "a modern mid-sized city with a rich ethnic feel". It also states: "In developing small towns, we must be careful to stress their individual characteristics; the last thing we should do is to apply the same formula throughout. In particular, we must take pains to protect cultural relics and other cultural and natural scenery that have ethnic or local characteristics". In a recent article, Professor Zhu Tiezhen, deputy director of the China Urban Development Research Institute, states this case more strongly, and also criticises previous practices. He is quoted²³ as saying: "A [...] reason [for the destruction of traditional townscape] is that new is seen as good. Current discussion on successes in urban development is about 'a completely new face' and there is no distinction made as to whether 'new' is good. [...] Some historic streets and ancient buildings in cities have unavoidably deteriorated with the passage of time, and they may look old and

decrepit, but their historical value continues to increase, some are probably priceless treasures, and if they are destroyed or demolished there is absolutely no way to recover them. At the moment, some cities are on the one hand ruthlessly tearing down ancient and truly valuable things, and on the other hand spending huge sums of money on fake, antique-style buildings with no cultural content. [...] A city's history is a nationality's history, and so we must attach great importance to the protection of cities' historical artefacts, open spaces, historic buildings, streets and zones, including entire old towns [gucheng] under special regulations [...] Development is an achievement, protection is also an achievement".

This report's examination of the recent and current transformations of Lhasa indicates that ideas for urban development such as those expressed in the tenth five year plan and by Professor Zhu have barely been implemented. Although such a pattern of modernisation is found in mainland China, it is more common in the 'national minority' areas. While it seems possible that with time such positions as Professor Zhu's might find not only the theoretical consent of the authorities but also their actual support, it seems that for Lhasa and other Tibetan cityscapes their implementation will come too late.

DOCUMENT

Scholar: progress no threat to traditional ethnic culture

Although it applies primarily to the situation in Yunnan, the following article reflects the folklore-oriented understanding of non-Chinese (non-Han) cultures of the PRC's 'national minorities', including Tibetans, which is widespread among both the authorities and large sections of the Chinese public and is therefore commonly a determinant in the drafting of cultural policies outside China proper. Two archetypal elements of the official discourse on minorities are remarkable. On the one hand, human rights are interpreted here primarily as the right to economic development; a development which is both brought by and 'guided' by the Chinese authorities. On the other hand, a strong evolutionistic pattern of history and culture is implied which reflects both traditional Chinese ethnocentric views on surrounding cultures and dogmatic Marxist theory. The article, which was published by the Chinese official news agency Xinhua on 1 November 2002, is reproduced here in full and without alterations.

Only through social and economic development and communication with the outside world, can an ethnic culture be appreciated, preserved and encouraged, a Chinese scholar of ethnic studies said in Beijing on Thursday.

Zheng Xiaoyun, a researcher with the Yunnan Academy of Social Sciences, told an international symposium on human rights that while ethnic culture should be protected, the right of ethnic people to progress should also be respected.

Zheng, from southwest China's Yunnan province, said some Westerners, struck by the primitive and bizarre culture of some ethnic minorities in the province, proposed to turn ethnic villages into isolated islands with no road or modern telecommunications links to the outside world.

Yunnan, home to 25 of China's 55 minority ethnic groups, is a target province of China's planned West Development, a program launched at the end of last century to boost economic and social development in the country's west.

23. Zhu Tiezhen: Chinese cities are gradually losing their characteristics". Development Research Centre, drcnet.com (in Chinese) 15 August 2002.

"Western people think economic and social development will change or even destroy the local culture of ethnic minorities," Zheng said.

The idea of roping off Chinese ethnic minority villages and keeping them as museums in the name of preserving culture actually went against human rights.

"This is really impractical and immoral," he said.

In the globalisation process no ethnic culture could remain untouched by outside influences and at the same time development was also a basic human right for each ethnic group.

"It's unfair if all the world are enjoying modern civilisation while these ethnic groups are segregated in their huts as cultural relics," Zheng said.

Most ethnic cultures in China came into being in a remote agrarian age and strict adherence to tradition without any change would certainly mean they could not keep pace with advances in the world.

Zhang said ethnic communities also wanted to see their own culture develop.

As for the trend among some ethnic people to wear modern dress, Zheng said it was their choice. "They have the right to choose what they think is beautiful."

Some traditional costumes needed complicated sewing and might take four years to make. "They are also thick and heavy because of the use of silver and other decorations, and inconvenient for daily wear."

Choosing modern clothes for daily wear did not mean abandoning tradition, as ethnic people still preferred their traditional costumes on festivals and ceremonies, he said.

TIN NEWS STORY

TIN NEWS UPDATE, 22 FEBRUARY 2002 (EDITED)

Obituary of Yulo Dawa Tsering

Geshe Yulo Dawa Tsering, the respected senior lama and former political prisoner who was an inspiration and support to Tibetans both in prison and after his release, has died at home in Lhasa. Yulo Dawa Tsering, who was in his seventies, served 20 years in prison after his participation in the March 1959 Uprising in Lhasa. He was detained again in December 1987 and spent more than seven years in prison for expressing views on the situation in Tibet in a video filmed by an Italian tourist. He was finally released several weeks before the arrival of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Religious Intolerance in 1994 although he remained under close and restrictive surveillance until his death on 17 January. According to a close friend, Yulo Dawa Tsering had been ill for more than a year.

Yulo Dawa Tsering's case came to international attention when he was arrested together with his friend Thubten Tsering, a monk from Sera monastery, after participating in a video interview in July 1987 with an Italian tourist, Dr Stefano Dallari, and an exile Tibetan monk visiting Lhasa. The videotape included comments by Yulo Dawa Tsering on human rights abuses and poverty in Tibet. Yulo Dawa Tsering, who was a tulku (reincarnate lama) and had attained the high monastic degree of Geshe in 1950, was held together with Thubten Tsering in the Tibet Autonomous Region Public Security Bureau detention centre (under the "Sitru" or "Number Four Unit") for a year before being sentenced in January 1989. They were

reportedly held for most of this period in solitary confinement with frequent interrogations. Yulo Dawa Tsering was sentenced to ten years and Thubten Tsering to six years for the offence of "spreading counter-revolutionary propaganda with foreign reactionary elements". A March 1988 Radio Lhasa broadcast accused the monks of having "viciously vilified the policies adopted by the Chinese Communist Party and the People's government."

Yulo Dawa Tsering was released conditionally in November 1994 in the run-up to the deadline at the end of December 1994 for China's admission to the World Trade

Organisation. It was also just prior to the visit of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Religious Intolerance, Abdelfattah Amor, to Lhasa later that November. Yulo Dawa Tsering reportedly told the Special Rapporteur during his visit that there was a ban on religious activity in prison and also a ban on readmission to monasteries and nunneries for monks and nuns who had completed prison sentences for political offences. Both practices were later mentioned in the UN report following the visit.

A delegation to Tibet of three members of the European Parliament was allowed to meet Yulo Dawa Tsering during their visit to Lhasa in November 1996. The Irish MEP Bernie Malone said afterwards: *"They [Chinese officials] said he was on parole but during the meeting it appeared to us that this was not parole in our sense of the word. He was not the master of his own movements."* A request to meet him by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Mary Robinson during her visit to Tibet in September 1998 was denied by the Chinese authorities. In the same year, the Special Rapporteur for Religious Freedom sent a communication to the Chinese authorities expressing concern about allegations that Yulo Dawa Tsering was being kept under police surveillance and that he was not allowed to live in his monastery, Ganden, nor to resume teaching classes at Lhasa University, where he had previously taught philosophy.

"An inspiration and support for others"

Yulo Dawa Tsering was well-known among Tibetans in Lhasa for his strength of mind and for the practical and emotional support he provided to those in prison and to political prisoners after their release. According to several former political prisoners in exile, he would give money that was given to him for his medical care to other Tibetans in need. One former prisoner said that at one point during his imprisonment Yulo Dawa Tsering left packages of food in the bathroom of the cell block for other inmates who at that time were not allowed to receive butter, meat or tsampa. A friend of his who knows several of his former cell-mates told TIN: *"He was a great inspiration for political prisoners, including those who were released and escaped into exile. Many consulted him about different things and it seems he was always there as a support for them. If any of them inside or outside prison had a problem or illness they would speak to him about it."*

Another ex-political prisoner, a former Ganden monk released in 1993, told TIN that prison officials would always point to Yulo Dawa Tsering as an example of a prisoner who had not 'reformed', referring to his 20 years in Drapchi prison from 1959 to 1979, when he carried out labour on a construction site. The former prisoner told TIN: *"During re-education meetings [officials] would always say to us, 'Look at him, he hasn't changed his ideas since 1959, and for that reason he is still here in prison. Yulo*

Dawa Tsering will take those ideas of freedom with him to his coffin." A former political prisoner now living in India told TIN: *"Yulo Dawa Tsering's mind and composure were very strong, perhaps from many years in prison. When other prisoners were being tortured, most prisoners would be very upset but he would remain calm."*

The former prisoner also said: *"Even when there were other elderly political prisoners who did a lot of religious practice in the cell-block, Yulo Dawa Tsering was often with the younger political prisoners, singing and joking with them. He was really interested in his fellow political prisoners; when a new prisoner arrived he would always talk to them, find out where they were from, why they had been arrested, what was the situation of their family and so on. He would thank them, saying they had done very good work for freedom and the future of Tibet."*

"A period of emergency and darkness"

Yulo Dawa Tsering apparently became disillusioned about the prospects for Tibet's future following his release from prison. He was particularly concerned about the numbers of Chinese workers, the high unemployment of Tibetans and the predominance of Chinese in senior official positions. Like many Tibetan intellectuals, he was also concerned about the decline in the use of the Tibetan language and deteriorating standards of education. He expressed some of these concerns in a letter he wrote two years ago, which was obtained by TIN. He wrote: *"These days the so-called Western Development project is underway. This project aims to transfer large numbers of Chinese people for permanent settlement into areas inhabited by minority nationalities, exploit mineral resources and above all to bear down heavily on people for political intransigence. Contrary to the claims of a 'rare opportunity' for the minority nationalities, this project represents a period of emergency and darkness."*

In the letter, Yulo Dawa Tsering also referred to the conditions of political prisoners at Drapchi, referring to the aftermath of the prison protests in May 1998 that led to the deaths of at least nine prisoners: *"In Drapchi, the living conditions for political prisoners are reported to be desperately poor and inadequate. Since 4 May 1998 the political prisoners have been subjected to constant observation and monitoring by the prison authorities. They are not allowed any kind of books or newspapers, let alone to watch television or listen to the radio. If a political prisoner so much as recites some prayers, the prison guards single them out for severe beatings. Under such a repressive policy, many political prisoners have lost their lives, in or outside the prison. Many have been rendered cripples or physically handicapped. Generally speaking, political prisoners who have obtained their release and are said to have been set free among the community are actually subjected to monitoring by their local Public*

Security Bureau. Their freedom of movement is severely restricted and they are banned from undertaking any work or travel without prior permission from the government authorities."

One of the former Drapchi prisoners told TIN: "It seems that Kushog Yulo was always very positive while in prison at the end of the 1980s, when political demonstrations were happening – he used to say that the Chinese would change their policy in Tibet soon and that freedom was near. But after his release it seems he was more realistic about the situation, he said that freedom was a possibility for Tibet, but it would not be easy to achieve." The former Ganden monk said: "He became disillusioned when he saw that there was no one looking after the political prisoners as they had in the late 1980s and early 1990s. He always felt a great responsibility for former political prisoners in Lhasa, particularly the Ganden monks who had called for his release during a demonstration [in the Barkor] in March 1988."

Yulo Dawa Tsering's health had been deteriorating for several years. According to a report received by TIN last

year, he was having trouble moving around and walking, and he was unable to do the 'kora' around the Barkor (the pilgrimage circuit). A friend of his told TIN that he also suffered from depression in the latter years of his life. He said: "After his release from prison, he was often taken in for questioning and held for short periods in detention. He didn't have a moment's peace, right up to the day he died."



Tibetan monks in East Tibet.

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TIN NEWS STORY

TIN NEWS UPDATE, 16 APRIL 2002 (EDITED)

Death of a poet and scholar: obituary of Jigme Thegchog

Jigme Thegchog, who died in December 2001 at the age of 50 after a long illness, was an influential scholar and monk known for his open-minded views on Tibetan culture and society, particularly the importance of the Tibetan language. Jigme Thegchog, from Rebong (Chinese: Tongren) in Malho (Ch: Huangnan) prefecture, Qinghai province (formerly in the Tibetan area of Amdo), was a lay person and married with three children before he took monks' vows. He was widely known among Tibetan intellectuals and monks for his poetry, prose and works of criticism, informed by both a secular and religious education.

A Tibetan source told TIN: "Jigme Thegchog was unlike many other monks in that he had a view of Tibetan society and the future of Tibet which did not only emerge from a religious perspective, but also from a political and scientific perspective following his education as a lay person."

Jigme Thegchog studied at the Qinghai National Minorities College in Xining, Qinghai (Tib. Amdo), under a well-known scholar the late Lobsang Shedrub Gyatso and also with the respected Alag Tseten Shabdrung, who died in 1985. Jigme Thegchog decided to become a monk in 1980 and left his family life to practise and study religion at Rebong monastery. During his monastic life, he taught at various monasteries and religious institutions in Tibetan areas and in China, including the Buddhist college at Kumbum monastery in Qinghai (Amdo) province and for a short period in 1987 at a school in Beijing for Tibetan tulkus (reincarnate lamas) set up by the 10th Panchen Lama. In 1998 he gave religious initiations at Kirti monastery in Ngaba Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture (Ch: Aba), Sichuan

province, and in Rebong. Jigme Thegchog also wrote a book on the history of Rebong and its monasteries (including some rare material on the lineage of families in the region), which is regarded as one of the best scholarly texts on the subject.

In the last few years of his life, Jigme Thegchog taught young lamas in Rebong monastery. Suffering for some time with diabetes and related conditions he was obviously conscious of his impending death since he is said to have sold all his belongings about a year before he died.

Another Tibetan source told TIN: "Jigme Thegchog was a very gentle man but also strong in his views. Once there was a lengthy debate among intellectuals in Qinghai about a newspaper article that said that Tibet is backward because of its culture. Unlike many other monks, Jigme Thegchog was not upset – he wrote a response saying that this was a good opportunity for Tibetans to discuss such

questions. He was very open-minded." The same source referred to a time when students started to go to the monastery to learn religious texts. While other monks encouraged this, Jigme Thegchog always urged the students to maintain their secular education as well. "He said that you should go to school to learn new things, if you want to learn about religion you should become a monk." A Tibetan former political prisoner also remembered how Jigme Thegchog ascribed a high value to secular as well as religious education. "After I was released from prison, Jigme Thegchog taught me some Tibetan poetry and literature in order to help me to appreciate our culture and language. He always encouraged me to go to university", the Tibetan told TIN.

Jigme Thegchog was frequently sought after to make comments on trends in Tibetan society by broadcasters and magazine publishers. He had very broad contemporary interests and was particularly concerned about education and development. He saw the current drive to develop the Western areas of China as superficial, however, and stressed that economic progress in itself mattered less than improvements to the livelihood of Tibetans, particularly through education. One of the above sources told TIN: "He was very focused on trying to challenge ways of thinking and to improve Tibetans' way of thinking. He also firmly believed that each Tibetan must take responsibility [for his or her own life] rather than blaming society or other people."

DOCUMENT

Poetry and prose by Jigme Thegchog

Jigme Thegchog, who died in December 2001, was well-known for his poetry and prose, written in classical religious style. His poem about the Tibetan language 'A Thunder of Heartfelt Praise for Tibetan Script and Language', published in 1981, was one of his most famous works. The poem expresses the view that the Tibetan language has the vocabulary and flexibility to convey profound meanings in clear terms and to represent and express a range of musical expressions including drama, theatre, opera and psalms. Jigme Thegchog writes that the most delicate of feelings can be expressed through the Tibetan language in poetry, and that the language is also precise enough to convey complex scientific concepts. In the complete poem, Jigme Thegchog carefully juxtaposes the notion of the importance of the Tibetan language with Chinese policies of modernisation ("Whilst the whole of China is moving forward on the path of the Four Modernisations, the Tibetan youth rely on the Tibetan language to follow suit/Through the Tibetan language the realisation of the Goals of the Four Modernisations will be like child's play"). An extract from the poem, translated from the Tibetan by TIN, is reproduced below. The second piece of work featured below is an extract from one of Jigme Thegchog's prose works entitled 'The True Sun', published in 1991. This work can be read on many different levels but is generally thought to be written in tribute to Jigme Thegchog's religious teachers, some Tibetans also consider this piece a hidden praise to the Dalai Lama.

One of Jigme Thegchog's best-known poems, published in 1981 in the Tibetan literary journal *Light Rain* (*sbrang char*), expresses the view that the Tibetan language is essential for Tibet's cultural and economic progress and modernisation ("Prior to the introduction of the Tibetan alphabet in the Land of Snows/Both Indians and Chinese used to call Tibet the 'Land of Darkness'"). The poem is an eloquent statement about the importance of keeping the Tibetan language alive in the context of a changing Tibetan society. In the poem, Jigme Thegchog writes that the Tibetan language has the vocabulary and flexibility to represent both abstract ideas and physical realities, and also that it is capable of conveying the finer points of philosophical principles and refuting arguments not based on logic. He also comments in the poem that Tibetans "rely on the Tibetan language" to follow the path set by China of the "Four Modernisations", thus suggesting that Tibetan language and culture can and should co-exist with contemporary realities. "The True Sun" is another well-known work by Jigme Thegchog written in traditional religious style. This work of prose can be interpreted on many different levels, and some Tibetans believe that he was referring to one of his religious teachers as well as to the Dalai Lama: "You are steadfast, perennial and beyond the phenomena of change...The sky could change, the earth could convulse, the forest of lotuses will never be satisfied with a shower of gems or the rays of light, the longing will continue" (published in *Light Rain*, 1991).

A Thunder of Heartfelt Praise for Tibetan Script and Language

(extract)

*Inanimate, yet the elixir for the eyes of the Learned,
Soundless, yet music to the ears of the Discerning,
Neither a sun nor a moon, yet the light of Dharma and Statecraft,
Who else, but the thirty consonants and four vowels of Tibet!*

*Prior to the introduction of the Tibetan alphabet in the Land of Snows,
Both Indians and Chinese used to call Tibet the 'Land of Darkness',
And ridiculed the people as 'Beast on two legs with human speech',
Facts attested by 'The Mirror of History'; not fiction or exaggeration!*

*Then the Dharmraja Srong Tsen Gampo, whose divine name alone,
Could alleviate the suffering of both the Samsara and Nirvana,
Like the glorious sun dispelling the prevailing darkness and gloom,
Attracting the world's attention to the divine and pristine land of Tibet.*

*Conquering the thirteen great valleys ordained to be His divine realm,
Songtsen established matrimonial alliance with the Chinese Emperor
And promoted friendship between their Tibetan and Chinese subjects,
Drawing praise for both Emperors as the Sun and the Moon in heaven.*

*Then the radiant light of Thumi Sambhota's intellect and wisdom,
Illuminated the nine layers of darkness enveloping Tibet
By devising the Tibetan alphabets and system of grammar,
That is indispensable for victory in the mundane and spiritual fields.*

*Relying on the dependable ship of Thumi's newly devised script,
Tibetan and Indian Panditas sallied to the Indian ocean of knowledge.
Time and again, to import vast treasures of the Five Major Sciences,
And enrich the Land of Snows; a feat that is beyond measurement.*

*And for over 13 centuries, a constellation of scholars emerged,
Innumerable as the stars, as though the sky had covered the Earth.
Awe-inspiring are the countless monasteries built to propagate the Dharma,
Their feat, comparable to the grandeur of the Sumeru, the King of Mountains.*

The True Sun

(extract)

*In the vast expanse of the limitless sky, amidst the canopy of white clouds and the multicoloured rainbow, there
is but only one true Light of the World. Your kindness,
which is far more vast than the blue sky and far more weighty than the crowded Earth.
You are the Eyes of the world as well as its Ornament, and through your radiant light illuminating everything
both inside and outside, you have become the peerless Lord
of knowledge and accomplishments.*

*When the lotuses of the night withdraw their petals close to their heart, and a cold breeze gently rocks them,
a sudden drizzle of raindrops from the dark clouds awakens
the multitude of sleeping blue Utpal flowers amidst the stones and pebbles strewn the banks of the river,
unfolding their petals into a blossom, their merry stalks firmly rooted in the ground and the blossoms nodding
as though waiting in anticipation of the Honoured Guest.*

O, This world! Pity these blue Utpal flowers. They still do not realise that they have been awakened and brought to life by the warmth of the Sun. They hardly have an inkling of where the planets get their light from or how the stars shine. If they are so wrapped up in ignorance that they don't realise the presence of the blessings of the sun's warmth in each flake of the snow drop, then they need not concern themselves about the nature of their last days.

The first rays of the dawn have appeared; the rumbling sound of the chariot drawn by the seven horses can be heard coming nearer; in the vastness of the blue sky, the clouds form a splendid row to accost the Guest. Are the people still deep in their slumber? The Rooster not only crows aloud to awaken them but also flaps its wings in desperation. The mice and owls have long since withdrawn deep into their dark caverns. The King of the birds, the Garuda, too, is on its way to the golden peaks in the East. The guests have already taken to the road. How can the hosts remain idle? Not only is it dawn now, the full glory of the morning is almost due.

The field of lotuses in full blossom yesterday that have shrunk in their beds last night, will not be cowed, and will verily recover to blossom and celebrate tomorrow. Just as the day is followed by the night and the long and cold days of winter are irreversible realities of life. They do not portend the end of the lotuses. The swarm of bees that buzz around in our fatherland in every direction and space, are merely visitors who enrich the marketplace on the golden mountains. No matter how long and far into future aeons, let it not be forgotten that this is the true nature of reality. Remember this and kindly bestow upon us your blessings of your joyous light.

O Great Sun! The splendour of the Spring as well as the glorious beauty of summer and the rich fruits of the autumn are all because of your benediction and kindness.

Bereft of your blessings and sustenance, even the river Ganga will feel forlorn and turn into icy mass; and without you, there is no doubt that the trees of the luxuriant forests will turn into gnarled and leafless stumps. Is it any wonder then that the flowing rivers murmur their song in your praise and the flowers in bloom, nod their heads to worship you? The majestic grandeur of the Mount Kailash in the west, the wild beauty of the vast grasslands in the middle and the great lakes and oceans in the lower reaches, all owe their existence to you.

You are steadfast, perennial and beyond the phenomena of change. What is apparent to the lotus is your setting behind the hills at dusk and reappearance in the morning from behind the Eastern mountain. In reality, you circle the universe around the King of Mountains, shedding light to all the realms of existence with equal light and compassion. You are blessed with the power to discern the truth when the moon shaded in black and white, feels conceited to contend with the stars for brightness!

O Great Root of Happiness! From the Peak of Mt Meru to the Golden Mountains and Pristine Lakes; from the ring of iron mountains or from the Pagsam woods to the Forests of Shamala; from Mt. Kailash to the innumerable lakes; your light and blessings can never cease.

You are the Splendour of a thousand rays, the light of fairness, unchanging and timeless, the reverberating sound of your victorious accomplishments echo from all directions like the thunder from the sky. The sky could change, the earth could convulse, the forest of lotuses will never be satisfied with a shower of gems or the rays of light, the longing will continue. It's true that the scented and pure hearts of the simple and humble folk are nothing compared to the material wealth of gold and silver. Nevertheless, for us the humble and meek whose faith and motivation is as pure as the snow white mountain, you are the one and only object of our hope and aspirations!

TIN NEWS STORY

TIN NEWS UPDATE, 22 MAY 2002 (EDITED)

Obituary of the painter Amdo Jampa

The Tibetan painter Jampa Tseten, popularly known as Amdo Jampa, died on 28 March at the age of 91 in Lhasa. Amdo Jampa was best-known for his vivid photo-realistic style and executed famous portraits of the Dalai Lama and the Panchen Lama. He was born in Chentsa (Chinese: Jianza) county in Qinghai (incorporating part of the Tibetan area of Amdo, hence his name), and became one of the first Tibetan artists to study at a Chinese art college. He was also a student of the famous Tibetan artist and scholar Gendun Choephel.

Amdo Jampa's work was celebrated by both the Dalai Lama and later by the Chinese authorities, although it has been the subject of some controversy within the Tibetan exile community. Gonkar Gyatso, a Tibetan artist from Lhasa based in the UK who knew Amdo Jampa, said that after Gendun Choephel, Amdo Jampa was the most important Tibetan artist of modern times. He told TIN: "He trained in the 1950s at the same time as several other very talented *thangka*" painters and he was the one who tried to do something different. He was quite brave to do so – as well as fortunate in having the support of the Dalai Lama for the work he began to create."

Amdo Jampa began to study the art of traditional Tibetan *thangka* painting after he became a monk at Drepung monastery in Lhasa as a young teenager. He left the monastery in order to accompany the Dalai Lama to Beijing in 1954, and he remained in the city to study under the Chinese teacher Li Zhongjing, who trained him in traditional Chinese painting as well as in Western painting techniques. According to an article in the Tibetan literary journal *Drangchar*: "As [Amdo Jampa] mastered the techniques of all three traditions of Tibetan, Chinese and Western art, his paintings were characterised by outstanding individuality, and a three-dimensional effect with the use of shading" (Volume 4, 1993).

On his return to Lhasa, Amdo Jampa was commissioned to paint inside a new palace (Tagtu Mingyur Podrang), which was completed within the Norbulingka, the official summer residence of the Dalai Lama, in 1956. His murals in the summer palace merged a traditional Tibetan style of painting with that of modern portrait painting. While the

general style of the paintings was clearly traditional, the figures of the Dalai Lama and others were easily recognisable, which at that time constituted a revolutionary innovation. Later, the 10th Panchen Lama asked Amdo Jampa to paint his portrait, which he carried out in a similarly realist style. Tashi Tsering, a Tibetan writer and co-founder of the Amnye Machen Institute in

Dharamsala (India) who knew Amdo Jampa, said: "It was a revelation for many people to see life-like images of such figures for the first time."

Traditionally, religious leaders were represented in a highly stylised manner which portrayed them with an other-worldly appearance. Gonkar Gyatso told TIN: "People were astonished and admired the techniques involved, but there was also some controversy, particularly because His Holiness the Dalai Lama looked so human in his work."

In the 1980s, Amdo Jampa travelled to India, where he carried out commissions for religious buildings for the Dalai Lama. When he returned to Tibet in the late 1980s, he lived in the central Tibetan area of Lhasa, and according to the

Tibetan magazine *Drangchar* occupied various official positions such as Chairman of the Tibet Fine Arts Association and Chief Research Officer of the Central Executive Committee of the Tibet Autonomous Museum of Cultural Artefacts.

He also opened an art school in Shol village at the foot of the Potala Palace in Lhasa. Heather Stoddard, an expert on Tibetan art who knew him, told TIN: "He lived in very simple surroundings in the middle of the old city at that time, just like any other ordinary Tibetan. He didn't seem to have great ambitions – he could probably have risen to



A fresco of the Dalai Lama painted by Amdo Jampa

become a star under the Communist authorities, but it seems he didn't want to do so."

Amdo Jampa's style used elements of modernity such as 'photo-realism' within a Buddhist context of reverence for religious teachers. The influences on his work were wide-ranging. Gonkar Gyatso says: "Once I went to his studio in Lhasa and he was studying a book of 15th century Italian religious art. Some of his paintings were clearly influenced by painters such as Carpaccio²⁵, who used vivid, opulent colours, little shading, and had a narrative style."

Jamyang Norbu, a Tibetan writer and co-founder of the cultural Amnye Machen Institute in Dharamsala (India) underlines that Amdo Jampa was particularly influenced by his Tibetan teacher Gendun Choephel. Gendun Choephel had travelled widely in India and was familiar not only with Indian Buddhist and Hindu art but was also aware of various European traditions, as reflected in his dynamic sketches of nudes and dancers. Unlike those of his teacher the resources that Jampa had to draw on artistically were limited due to political circumstances. "Amdo Jampa just didn't have the same depth of cultural and intellectual background as Gendun Choephel, because of the circumstances of the past 50 years in Tibet," said Jamyang Norbu. "But there was a real continuity about his work. He was painting throughout the 1940s and '50s, and he lived through the Uprising in Lhasa in 1959, the Cultural Revolution and even the post Deng era, all the while managing to somehow keep up his art, though it must be said that like other Tibetan artists he seems to have produced nothing during the ten years of the Cultural Revolution. As the Dalai Lama's court painter, he was probably lucky not to have had his fingers smashed during that time."

Amdo Jampa's work has been wide-spread in Tibet and markedly influenced contemporary domestic painting. Gonkar Gyatso said: "Before the Chinese ban on Dalai Lama pictures [in 1996], many monasteries I visited all over Tibet had a large-scale picture of the Dalai Lama on the main shrine – all in the style of Amdo Jampa's famous painting of the Dalai Lama."

The modern artist Elke Hessel who works with Tibetan artists in Lhasa, however, points out that contemporary

painters in Tibet today are less influenced by Amdo Jampa's work: "Some of Amdo Jampa's students who are *thangka* painters have added modern elements such as the use of light and shadow to their style – when they paint the portrait of a contemporary teacher, the face and the hands are painted in a photo-realistic style. But they also try to paint 'modern Buddhist paintings', in which you can see traditional elements mixed with fantasy or surrealism, painted mostly with oil colours on canvas. As far as I know Amdo Jampa has no real influence on the contemporary art scene in Lhasa. Most of the young Tibetan artists have studied in Chinese art academies, which are very open minded and modern, or in the art department of the Tibet University. They are more interested in western artists like Andy Warhol, David Hockney or Baselitz."

At times Amdo Jampa has been a controversial figure in the eyes of some Tibetan exiles. For example, his work "The Three Kings" (left) for the Namgyal Temple in Dharamsala (India) was first rejected by the commissioning exile authorities, although it finally found a prominent place in the neighbouring Tsuglakhang central temple. In her book "In the Image of Tibet: Tibetan Painting after 1959" (Reaktion Books, 1999) Clare Harris, an expert on Tibetan art, remarks on that episode: "In Dharamsala, any involvement with Maoist China can be viewed as suspect and deviation from 'traditional' styles implies a kind of cultural treachery. Jampa's mistake was that he had both studied in China and painted in a style that was not recognised by the exile audience as part of the remembered traditions of Tibet. However, although he may well have been exposed to Socialist Realism in Beijing, Jampa did not become an adherent of its credo. According to Mao Zedong and his followers, Socialist Realism was a device to be used to create art for the people, by the people, about the people and ultimately, we might argue, to coerce the people. But Jampa Tseten had become a realist painter without becoming a socialist. With the Dalai Lama as a patron, he had no reason to believe that this was beyond the realm of possibility for a Tibetan."

Even when quite elderly, Amdo Jampa would do his 'kora' (religious circumambulation) around Lhasa every day. He leaves a wife and a large family; his youngest child was born when he was in his eighties.

²⁵ Vittore Carpaccio was from the Venetian school of Italian painters (b. 1472, Venezia, d. 1526, Capodistria).

TIN NEWS STORY

TIN NEWS UPDATE, 30 JANUARY 2003 (EDITED)

Tibet Autonomous Region's Regulations on Tibetan Language unlikely to stop the growing influence of Chinese

A report issued on 25 January 2003 by the official Chinese news agency Xinhua praises the 'Regulations on the Study, Use and Development of the Tibetan Language' as one of the major achievements of the out-going 7th People's Congress of the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR). According to the report, the regulations will "carry out China's strategy of developing its west and conserve local cultures". The overall emphasis of the regulations is on the "equality" of the Tibetan and "common national" (Han Chinese) languages. However, while safeguards and promotional measures for the Tibetan language are included in the regulations, in the absence of measures that in practice favour the use of Tibetan, the position of Chinese, which is already dominant in business, commerce and administration, is likely to be enhanced.

The new regulations, which were approved on 22 March 2002 by the 15th session of the 7th TAR People's Congress, were described by the China Daily on the next day as "the first government regulation[s] ever passed in China on preserving an ethnic language". Their general emphasis is on permitting use of either Tibetan or Chinese – quoted by Xinhua as the "commonly used languages" – "according to need", for example in important conferences and meetings of state organs, work meetings of units in TAR enterprises (article 4) and in legal organs (article 5). The new regulations replaced the 'TAR Regulations on the Study, Use and Development of the Tibetan language (for trial implementation)' that were issued by the TAR People's Congress in 1987 at the instigation of the 10th Panchen Lama and Ngabo Ngawang Jigme, and promulgated in March 1989. These trial regulations set out procedures for implementing Tibetan language policy in education and public life, permitting the use of both Tibetan and Chinese. Tibetans were to speak in Tibetan at important, large-scale meetings, though there was no mention of what language Chinese cadres were to speak. According to a Xinhua report in March 1989, the Regulations also contained stipulations that would have ensured the gradual prevalence of the Tibetan language, moving upwards through the education system (see "Policy shift in teaching in Tibet", TIN News Update 6 May 1997).

However, practical measures to ensure a more widespread use of the Tibetan language were either not actually implemented or ultimately withdrawn. In education for instance, a pilot project to extend Tibetan medium education into secondary schooling was abandoned in 1996, and the commencement of Chinese classes in Tibetan schools was subsequently brought forward. With the new regulations (2002) stating in article 6 that "During compulsory education, Tibetan and the common national language will be the basic educational languages", no positive discrimination of Tibetan seems even to be intended anymore. In a similar vein, article 10 in the new regulations states that priority should be given by state organs in employing "those who are proficient in the use of

both Tibetan and the common national language". This is a shift in emphasis from the 1987 regulations that specifically underlined proficiency in Tibetan as one of the qualifications for recruitment and promotion in government jobs.

Some of the aspects of the 1987 regulations aimed at promoting Tibetan have been carried over to the 2002 regulations. For example, article 11 of the 2002 regulations provides for dual language seals, signs and notices in public places, and article 5 states that citizens will be able to use their native language in court proceedings. Article 9 states that the TAR is "actively to develop Tibetan language undertakings including education, news, publishing, broadcasting and films" – it does not mention, though, whether extra funding has been made available or whether the obligation is to be met through the TAR's existing budget. In fact, since promulgation of the new regulations in March 2002, no significant steps have been taken towards the practical implementation of measures such as these to promote Tibetan.

At the same time, the role of the standard Chinese language (putonghua) is being promoted throughout the People's Republic of China. The central 'Law on the Common National Language' was passed on 31 October 2000 by the 18th plenum of the Ninth National People's Congress, to come into force on 1 January 2001. The law defines the "national common language" [guojia tongyong yuyan wenzi] as comprising "putonghua and standard Han characters". The specifically political nature of this law is evident from article 5 which reads: "Use of the common national language must be of benefit to state sovereignty and dignity of the nationalities, be of benefit to national unity and unity of the nationalities, and be of benefit to the construction of socialist material and spiritual civilisations." In accordance with that, article 4 states: "Local governments and other relevant organs at all levels must adopt measures to popularise putonghua and to promote standard Han characters."

DOCUMENT

TAR Regulations on the Study, Use and Development of the Tibetan Language Passed 22 March 2002

1. *The Tibetan language is [a] commonly used language in the Autonomous Region. In order to assure the study, use and development of the Tibetan language, these regulations have been stipulated according to the Constitution of the People's Republic of China, the Law on Regional Nationality Autonomy of the People's Republic of China, the Law on the Common National Language of the People's Republic of China, and relevant regulations, combined with the region's actual situation.*
2. *The TAR adheres to the principle of equality of all nationality's languages. [The TAR] protects the unity of the spoken and written languages and the legal system. People's Governments at every level must give importance to, and strengthen, work on the study, use and development of the Tibetan spoken and written language [Zang yu wen].*
3. *When state organs at all levels in the TAR are carrying out their duties, Tibetan and the common national language have equal effect.*
4. *Important conferences and meetings of state organs at all levels in the TAR are to simultaneously use the Tibetan and common national languages, or to use one of them. Work meetings of units in TAR enterprises will, according to need, use one or both of the commonly used languages. Commonly issued documents from all levels of state organs must use both Tibetan and the common national language.*
5. *Legal organs at all levels in the TAR shall, in their legal activities, according to need, make use of one or several local commonly used languages. Citizens of all nationalities are assured of the right to use their native language to carry out legal proceedings.*
6. *During compulsory education, Tibetan and the common national language will be the basic educational languages. Courses are offered in Tibetan and the common national language, both spoken and written, and at the right time courses in foreign languages will be launched.*
7. *The TAR must adopt measures to eliminate illiteracy amongst young and middle-aged Tibetan citizens.*
8. *The TAR urges and encourages each nationality to learn the other nationality's written and spoken language. At the same time as studying and using the Tibetan language, Tibetan cadres and workers must study and use the common national language, and Han nationality and other minority nationality cadres and workers must also study and use the Tibetan language.*
9. *The TAR is actively to develop Tibetan language undertakings including education, news, publishing, broadcasting and films. [The TAR] is to give importance to publishing Tibetan language children's books, books for popular consumption and popular science books. [The TAR is to] urge and support scientific research organisations, science and technical personnel and literature and art workers to use the Tibetan language to carry out science popularisation publicity, to create works of literature and art and to put on shows.*
10. *State organs and units in state enterprises at all levels in the TAR, when employing government functionaries or technological personnel should, where other things are equal, give priority to employing those who are proficient in the use of both Tibetan and the common national language.*

11. *Seals, certificates and notice boards of state organs, people's organisations, units in state enterprises including permanent structures stationed outside the region must simultaneously use Tibetan and the common national language. Facilities, notices, advertisements and other wording in public places in towns must simultaneously use Tibetan and the common national language, and must be written in a standard and neat way, with accurate translation.*
12. *Packaging, user manuals and so on of goods produced and sold by enterprises within the TAR region must simultaneously use Tibetan and the common national language. The names, operations, marked prices, receipts, and so on of all types of service industries within the TAR must simultaneously use Tibetan and the common national language.*
13. *Tibetan Language Work Offices of People's Governments at county level and above must strengthen supervision and management of the study and use of the Tibetan language, strengthen scientific research into the Tibetan language, and promote the development of the Tibetan language.*
14. *The TAR must adopt measures for the training of interpreter/ translators, and give importance to and strengthen translation work between Tibetan and the national common language. The Tibetan Language Work Office of the TAR People's Government is to integrate, standardise and publish Tibetan language terms and technical terms, and to promote the standardisation of translation terminology. State organs, people's organisations and units of state enterprises at all levels in the TAR are, according to need, to establish translation organs or to provide translators.*
15. *Units and individuals in People's Governments at and above the county level who make prominent achievements in the study, use and development of the Tibetan language will be given commendations and awards.*
16. *Those who infringe article 11 will be ordered to make correction within a fixed period by the Tibetan Language Work Office of the People's Government at and above the county level.*
17. *Those who infringe article 12 will be ordered to make correction within a fixed period by the office for the administration and management of industry and commerce.*
18. *Infringements of other articles will either be dealt with through criticism and education by the Tibetan Language Work Office of the People's Government at and above the county level or by administrative sanctions from the local unit.*
19. *The TAR People's Government will formulate detailed implementing regulations on the basis of these regulations.*

OFFICIAL NEWS COVERAGE AND OTHER SOURCES**2 January 2002**

China is building a "Digital Tibet" Internet network to break the monopoly of the dissemination of Tibet information by foreign countries that present a "distorted" and "separatist" perspective. Increasing numbers of web sites about Tibet have emerged in China in recent years and central and local government will invest significantly in information facilities in the region. Already, optical fibre cables have been laid from Lhasa to Xigaze, Nyingchi, Qamdo and other areas. All the towns of the region will be connected by telephone before 2005.

Xinhua news agency

6 January 2002

Education among ethnic minority people in Gansu Province has reportedly made a marked improvement in recent years, with the establishment of learning centres and boarding schools, providing education for children from herdsmen families. 2,521 ethnic minority students from Gansu entered colleges and universities in 2001, making up 10.2 per cent of the province's total college enrolment. More than 306 primary and high schools as well as two universities in the province have opened ethnic language courses.

Xinhua news agency

24 January 2002

China has launched its largest website on human rights with a zero-tolerance vow to smash Muslim separatists. The English-language site was set up with a promise to present the nation's human rights situation "comprehensively and objectively." However, the site is not a self-examining review of China's record on human rights. Articles about Falun Gong are featured, as well as articles about the Chinese government view on human rights in Tibet, which denounces the Dalai Lama "clique". Amnesty International officials were not impressed by the website, especially with regard to the death sentence statistics. The true figures remain a state secret in China. Many cases are reported in which death sentences were passed on the basis of contentious evidence, including confessions extracted under torture.

Wired.com

25 January 2002

Tibet's Nyingchi Prefecture has made sound progress in promoting good ties between the soldiers of the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) and the local masses, showing the good tradition of "soldiers loving the masses" and "masses loving the soldiers" has taken solid root.

Tibetinfocor.com

29 January 2002

There are reportedly over 4,000 registered dial-up Internet users in Tibet. So far, there are more than 100 websites about Tibet in simplified Chinese and over 300,000 related web pages. In Lhasa a

50-metre-long computer street has opened. Recently available Tibetan language software has made it possible for Tibetans to write with Tibetan characters on computers.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

6 February 2002

In opposition to China's extreme population-control methods, U.S. President Bush is withholding \$34 million from the U.N. Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA), a body accused of assisting forced abortions and sterilisation operations in China. Beijing is hoping to restrict the majority of couples to one child for another generation.

Washington Post

7 February 2002

The State Administration of Radio, Film and Television has donated 4,000 sets of radios to farmers and herdsmen in Tibetan to let them keep abreast of current affairs and useful knowledge while enjoying entertainment items.

Tibetinfocor.com

10 February 2002

Human Rights bimonthly, China's first professional magazine on human rights issues, has been launched, published as Chinese and English versions by the China Society for Human Rights Studies (CSHRS). The magazine aims to open an access for the international community to understand China's human rights conditions by narrating stories, discussing theories and initiating dialogues about human rights issues.

Xinhua.net

27 March 2002

Sichuan Province will allocate six million yuan to construct remote education centres in 12 middle schools in three minority autonomous prefectures in 2002. The project would allow the same education opportunities to students in Aba Qiang Autonomous Prefecture, Ganzi Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture and Liangshan Yi Autonomous Prefecture as their city-dwelling contemporaries. It is expected that the remote education network will cover 48 county-level middle schools in the three minority autonomous prefectures in three years.

Xinhuanet

4 April 2002

About 10,000 villagers living on the border of Qinghai and Gansu provinces have been making a living almost entirely on illegal blood sales, which were banned by the state in 1998 in an attempt to contain blood-borne diseases such as Aids. But according to a report by the Beijing Youth Daily, state-run blood collection centres are still involved in the illicit trade. The official blood collection centres are often located in the poorest mountainous areas. Blood sales to state-run collection centres in the countryside are known to have been the source of an Aids epidemic in various villages in Henan province.

5 April 2002

With the improved living standards and more cash earnings, learning to drive and owning a car has become a vogue in Lhasa. So far, there are about 20,000 private cars in Lhasa, accounting for about 52.4 per cent of the automobiles in the regional capital.

Tibetfor.com

11 April 2002

China's first Chinese-version General History of Tibet has been published by the Tibet People's Publishing House with a donation of fund from Lujiang Press in East China's Fujian Province. The book traces the region's history between 600,000 years ago and 1951.

Tibetfor.com

12 June 2002

The Chinese Ministry of Education said Wednesday that 98 percent of school age children in the regions where ethnic minorities predominate are now enrolled at school, equal to the national average. China's 55 minority groups have all had students who have gone on to university with some even gaining masters degrees and doctorates.

Xinhua.net

18 July 2002

Ten students, the first group of post-graduates trained independently by universities in the Tibet Autonomous Region have completed their post-graduate studies and were awarded graduation and master's degree certificates. Tibet now has four institutions of higher learning: Tibet University, the Tibet Institute for Nationalities, Tibet Institute for Agriculture and Animal Husbandry and the College of Tibetan Medicine.

Xinhua

30 July 2002

Nearly 80 Japanese medical experts and about 100 Chinese experts in Tibetan medicine gathered in Xining on Monday at a seminar to explore ways to promote traditional Tibetan medicine.

Xinhua

6 August 2002

The Chinese government has funded restoration of the Grand Golden Tile Hall, the main hall of Gumbum [Kumbun] Lamastery in Qinghai Province. The 17th century structure had been eroded by wind, rain and insects and some of the walls were developing cracks. The building was reopened to the public on 6 August after several months of renovation.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

8 August 2002

Puqung, executive vice-chairman of the Tibet Autonomous Regional People's Congress, met on 8 August with the assistant group of the International Relations Committee of the US House of Representatives currently visiting Lhasa and briefed them on the situation with regard to the use of the Tibetan language. The

National People's Congress, through legislation, has passed a law to safeguard the Tibetan language. Currently, 87 per cent of Tibetan children of school age are attending schools, where they are receiving a good education in the Tibetan language.

Xinhua news agency for Hong Kong, Beijing

8 August 2002

Tibetans will become a minority in their own capital in the next few years as Han Chinese migrants pour into the city to take part in a new drive to develop Tibet's economy, a senior local official said yesterday. But the influx of investment and skilled labour to Lhasa will bring unprecedented prosperity and stability to the region, said Jin Shixun, deputy director-general of Tibet's Development and Planning Commission. It was one of the boldest admissions yet by a mainland official on the sensitive issue of Han migration to Tibet, a policy that critics say Beijing is encouraging to swamp Tibetan culture. "At the moment the population here in Lhasa stands at around 200,000 – about half of them are the migrant population," he said.

2 September 2002

The first General History of Tibet is being compiled by the China Tibetology Research Center, and Lhapa Puntso, secretary-general of the center, has invited Taiwan Tibetologists to participate in the Project.

Xinhuanet

13 September 2002

The English and Chinese versions of the Google.com search engine resumed operations yesterday after a two-week block, suspected to have been ordered by the government. IT analysts suspected that while the site itself might work, it now used a mechanism to block access to anti-government sites. Fellow American search engine AltaVista, which offers a translation feature, remained inaccessible yesterday.

South China Morning Post (Business Post supplement), Hong Kong

24 October 2002

The China Children Arts Theatre will move the sacred land of "Shangri-La", made famous by James Hilton's best-selling novel "The Lost Horizon" (1933), onto the stage. To ensure a hit, the theatre has invested 3 million yuan (US\$362,319) in the production's lighting and costumes. "We will continue to work on it until 'Shangri-La' becomes known as one of the best Chinese musicals," said Ouyang Yibin, director of the theatre.

China Daily

25 October 2002

A delegation of Chinese Tibetan studies experts held talks with German parliamentarians in Berlin on Thursday 24 October. President of the human rights commission of the German federal parliament, Christa Nickels, said that it was necessary to hold similar talks in the future to help them better find out the history and the current situation in Tibet. She also stressed that the German

government and people adhere to "one-China" policy and that Tibet is an inseparable part of the Chinese territory.
Xinhuanet

7 November 2002

In an effort to improve the professional skills of Tibetan officials, eight prestigious universities across China are to enrol a total of 120 university postgraduates per year for the next five years. All applicants must be university graduates who have worked in a government department or institution for at least three years, and must agree to return to Tibet after graduation.
Xinhua news agency, Beijing / SWB

14 November 2002

An encyclopedia containing about 400 different Tibetan medicine formulas has been published by the Shanghai Science and Technology Publishing House. More than 40 specialists from the Pharmaceuticals Institute attached to the Tibetan Medicine Hospital in Tibet spent 13 years compiling the book.
Xinhua

6 Outside Tibet

At the southern fringe of Tibet, Nepal, together with India, has been a land of refuge for Tibetans fleeing from Chinese-controlled Tibet since the early 1950s. Whereas mass movements of refugees belong to the past, many Tibetans who chose to remain in Tibet continue to travel through Nepal on their way to in India. They go to seek the blessings of the Dalai Lama and often visit their relatives, generating obvious embarrassment and suspicion amongst the Chinese authorities. Because many Tibetans cross the border without the required travel documents, they are technically 'illegal immigrants', a position the Chinese authorities are keen to uphold and one that the Nepalese authorities increasingly support. However, the Chinese authorities and their restrictive policies in providing travel documents to Tibetans appear mainly responsible for the existing situation.

Meanwhile the TAR authorities this year began another attempt to induce exile Tibetans to return to Tibet.

TIN NEWS STORY

TIN NEWS UPDATE, 02 JANUARY 2002 (EDITED)

Decline in numbers of Tibetans arriving as China and Nepal tighten security on the border

Border security on both sides of the Tibetan-Nepalese border has been stepped up in the last few weeks, leading to a significant decline in the numbers of Tibetans crossing the border. More Tibetans usually arrive from Tibet during the winter months than at any other time and many are currently attempting to travel to teachings by the Dalai Lama in India later this month. An official Chinese report claimed recently that 2,500 Tibetans have been caught in Tibet in the past eight months trying to cross the border either into or out of Tibet. Security measures have been stepped up on the Nepalese side of the border as a result of China's continuing influence regarding the issue of Tibetans passing through Nepal as well as the current state of emergency in Nepal imposed by the government in order to counter the activities of Maoist guerrilla forces.

The number of arriving Tibetans normally increases in the winter months, particularly in November, December and January. During 2001, however, their number was approximately half that of the equivalent period over the past five years. Roland Weil, Protection Officer of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees, told TIN: *"Approximately 2,500 Tibetan refugees arrive in Nepal every year. The total annual figure for 2001 is likely to be well under 2,000. The safety of Tibetans crossing the mountains into Nepal is increasingly uncertain, partly due to the risks they face on arrival in Nepal, and also because many guides have been arrested over the past year."* The decline in numbers of Tibetans arriving to transit through Nepal is particularly notable since many Tibetans from Tibet were expected to attend the Kalachakra teachings (a traditional Buddhist ceremony) by the Dalai Lama in Bodhi Gaya, northern India, at the end of January. The Chinese authorities are aware that many Tibetans may be seeking

to leave Tibet to attend this ceremony, which may have led to further restrictions being imposed. TIN reported on 24 December 2001 that there has been a marked increase in deportations of Tibetan refugees from Nepal, with at least 15 Tibetans known to have been repatriated from Nepalese border areas since 25 November 2001.¹

According to Xinhua, security personnel on the Chinese side of the border have stepped up patrols in the Nangpala area as part of the 'Strike Hard' campaign (Xinhua, 16 October 2001). The report stated that in the eight months since February, police working in the border areas *"tracked and apprehended more than 2,500 people trying to cross the border"*. This figure could be exaggerated in the interests of local officials and in order to serve Chinese propaganda purposes. It would include Tibetans returning to Tibet from India and Nepal and Tibetans detained in border areas without official permits. Xinhua reported:

¹ See "New increase in deportations of Tibetans from Nepal", TIN News Update, 24 December 2001 <http://www.tibetinfo.net/news-updates/nu241201.htm>

"During the Strike Hard campaign, officers and men of the Tibetan border patrol units have had to brave freezing conditions and extreme discomfort in order to carry out their duties of preserving stability in the border regions of the Motherland. As a crossing point, Nangpa-la mountain pass has always been a 'golden route' for people trying to steal across the border. Patrolling the mountain pass at Nangpa-la is a duty that has to be carried out every night by the officers and men of the unit and involves a two-hour walk from the unit's temporary station to Nangpa-la. Wearing leather hats and thick padded greatcoats, they have to wade through three waist-deep streams and traverse two mountains that are snow-capped even in summer."

The Nangpa pass (Tibetan: Nangpa-la) is one of the four main entry points from Tibet into Nepal - the others are Humla, Mustang, Dram (Khasa in Nepalese and Zhangmu in Chinese). A new checkpoint was set up on the Nangpa-la pass last year, approximately two kilometres from the border on the Chinese-Tibetan side. A Tibetan who was travelling earlier this year to Nepal through the border county of Tingri (Ch: Dingri) reported that officials financially rewarded local people for providing information on Tibetans suspected of planning to escape across the Nangpa-la.

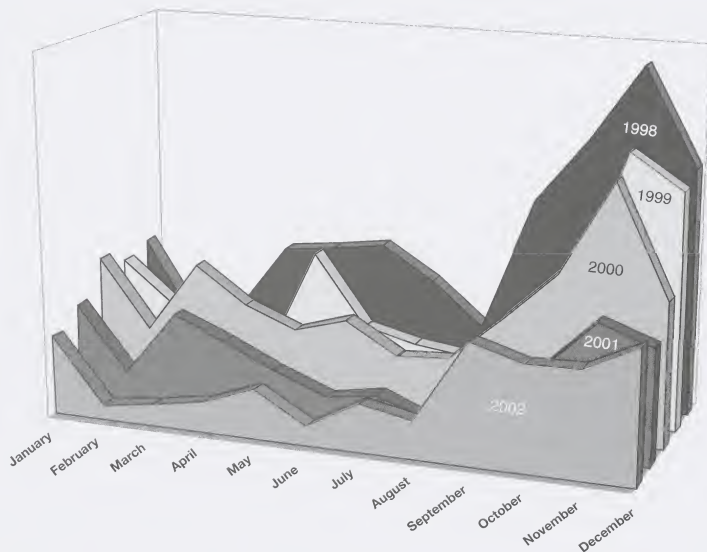
The Kathmandu Post reported three weeks ago that Chinese security forces were on "high alert" due to the current state of emergency in Nepal. According to the

Nepalese newspaper, an unnamed security official said that Chinese officials have increased security measures along the Nepal-China border because the Nepalese government has officially designated the Maoist groups currently active in Nepal as "terrorists". Chinese security personnel are now keeping close watch on Nepalese people who cross the border into Tibet, the official said, also stating that Nepalese and Chinese officials had made an agreement to cooperate in "containing the terrorism" in the Tatopani area (12 December 2001).

A Westerner travelling from Tibet to Nepal overland two weeks ago said that the journey from the border areas of Nepal to Kathmandu took twice as long as usual due to extra security check-points resulting from the state of emergency in Nepal. Roland Weil from the UNHCR told TIN: "Naturally with the imposition of the state of emergency in Nepal there has been an increase in security in border areas, including increased checks on identity of people passing through these regions. So Tibetans travelling without legal papers are therefore at increased risk of being taken into custody and not allowed to proceed to Kathmandu."

According to the UNHCR, the Nepalese government stopped granting asylum to Tibetans who had arrived from Tibet after December 1989 onwards. The Nepalese government, the UNHCR and the Tibetan government in exile expect Tibetans who have arrived in Nepal to continue through to India after a stay at the UNHCR

Tibetan Arrivals to Nepal 1998-2002 (per month)



reception centre in Kathmandu. Nepal's legislation on immigration makes no distinction between foreigners and asylum seekers, nor does it make any specific provision for refugees. Both foreigners and asylum seekers arriving in Nepal are considered illegal immigrants if they fail to comply with Article 3 (1) of the Nepalese Immigration Act (1992), which states: "No foreigner is allowed to enter or stay in the Kingdom of Nepal without a visa". It is rare for Tibetans entering Nepal to have a visa or legal papers. It has become increasingly difficult for Tibetans from central Tibet, particularly Lhasa, to obtain passports in recent years, although it is still possible for them to do so if they have good connections with well-placed officials or are able to afford bribes to pass onto a "middleman" who can obtain access to officials. A Tibetan from Lhasa told

TIN: *"All applicants for passports and visas are screened for their background and present loyalty to China. Moreover, participation and support for the Tibetan cause is the deciding factor; one family member [with a record] is sufficient to create problems for the entire family."*

China aims to make a wide-ranging assessment of border controls as part of its commitment to membership of the World Trade Organisation. Recent reports broadcast on Chinese television indicate that the authorities are aiming to make travelling within and beyond China easier for certain categories of travellers, such as business people. However there is no evidence that the new moves are likely to lead to decreased travel restrictions for most Tibetans.

TIN NEWS STORY

TIN NEWS UPDATE, 15 FEBRUARY 2002 (EDITED)

Tibetan prisoners in Nepal seek royal pardon

Eleven Tibetans serving ten-year prison sentences in Nepal for failing to possess relevant travel or residency documents requested a pardon from the Nepalese King prior to Nepal's 'Democracy Day' on 19 February 2002, a date when the King traditionally pardons certain prisoners. The long prison sentences have caused concern among the Tibetan community in Nepal because most Tibetans passing through Nepal or resident in the kingdom lack the official papers that were required by the Nepalese immigration authorities in the case of the 11 Tibetan prisoners.

Two of the Tibetans, monks who had studied at Sera monastery in south India, were arrested on 20 August 2001 in a restaurant in Bouddhanath, Kathmandu, for failing to possess appropriate residence documents. Two days later, eight Tibetans travelling back to Tibet via Nepal were arrested by Nepalese security personnel at Thankot checkpoint at the edge of the Kathmandu valley. The eight Tibetans were fined a total of \$1624 each (representing the visa fee, late visa fee and a further penalty and calculated on the number of days they had been in the country without a valid tourist visa) and the two monks were fined a total of \$2733 each (visa fee, late visa fee and further penalty), with failure to pay incurring a ten-year prison sentence. None of the ten Tibetans had the money to pay the fines and so were all imprisoned by the Nepalese Immigration department, operating under the Nepalese Home Ministry. The fines for the eight Tibetans were based on their illegal stay in Nepal following their entry into the country in January 2001. Their legal representatives have argued that while it was correct that they entered Nepal on this date, they only passed through Nepal on their way to India, before travelling back to Tibet via Nepal in August 2001. An 11th Tibetan, a monk who had been living in Nepal, has already served nearly two years in Bhatra prison in Kathmandu after he was arrested in June 2000 in the Solokhumbu area of Nepal for not possessing valid documents.

The majority of Tibetans entering Nepal do not have a Nepalese visa or any official travel documents. There are

procedures in place between the Nepalese authorities and the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) for Tibetans who arrive in Nepal and pass through the country to go to India. However there are no agreed procedures for Tibetans returning to Tibet from India via Nepal. The representative for the UNHCR in Nepal, Michel Dupoizat, told TIN that in order to avoid other arrests of Tibetans in Nepal, efforts are currently being made to ensure that Tibetans coming from India will be able to safely cross Nepal on their way to Tibet in future. Wangchug Tsering, Representative of the Dalai Lama in Kathmandu, told TIN that there had been a "positive response" from the Nepalese Home Ministry regarding the possibility of issuing some form of identity cards for Tibetans who want to return to Tibet from India via Nepal.

According to sources in Kathmandu, the Nepalese authorities have increased the number of random checks on Tibetans for legal documents particularly in the Bouddhanath stupa area in Kathmandu, although this is likely to be linked to the current state of emergency which has been imposed by the government in order to counter the activities of Nepalese Maoist guerrilla forces. The representative of the Dalai Lama in Kathmandu, Wangchug Tsering, said: *"The situation appears to be ever more fragile for Tibetans in Nepal."*

A precedent was set for these latest arrests in late 2000 when a group of 19 Tibetans were detained when trying to

cross the border from India into Nepal, in order to return to Tibet. If well-wishers had not paid the large fines handed down to the 18 Tibetan men and one woman they would have been liable to more than two years in prison (they served six months before the fines were paid). The arrests in 2000 followed a review by the Nepalese government of the 1950 Border Treaty Act between Nepal and India after the hijacking by terrorists of an Indian Airlines flight from Kathmandu to Delhi in India in 1999. The Border Treaty Act provided free border access for Nepalese and Indian citizens travelling between the two countries, and the review of the Act has resulted in more stringent border controls on the India-Nepal border, which is likely to continue to affect increasing numbers of Tibetans travelling back to Tibet from India. The escape of the 17th Karmapa, Ugyen Trinley Dorje, through Nepalese territory in January 2000 was also a factor that led to increased pressure from China on Nepal, and intensified border controls between Nepal and India.

The eight young Tibetans in detention in Kathmandu are from the traditional Tibetan area of Amdo (now largely absorbed into the Chinese province of Qinghai). Six of

them travelled to study in exile schools in India, and two went to India on pilgrimage. One of the Tibetans, a 22-year old Tibetan woman, is currently being cared for at the Tibetan Reception Centre due to her poor health. When her condition stabilises she will be required to serve the remainder of her sentence in prison. The seven other Tibetans and two monks, who are originally from Chamdo (Chinese: Changdu) are being held in Kathmandu's central prison in Dilli Bazaar.

The Nepalese King traditionally grants pardons to certain prisoners on three key anniversary dates – Democracy Day on 19 February, Constitution Day (which usually falls in the first half of November depending on the Nepalese lunar calendar) and on his birthday, 7 July. The 11 Tibetans' request for a Royal Pardon is supported by the office of the Dalai Lama in Kathmandu and the UNHCR, and the final decision will be taken by the Nepalese cabinet under the auspices of the King.

Note: The request from the 11 Tibetans for an amnesty was unsuccessful.

TIN NEWS STORY

TIN NEWS UPDATE, 02 JULY 2002 (EDITED)

Two more Tibetans arrested in Kathmandu

Two more Tibetans have been arrested in Nepal for failing to produce valid travel or residence documents. They are currently being detained in Kathmandu's Dilli Bazaar prison with 11 Tibetans who were arrested on similar charges in 2000 and 2001.² Like the group of 11, the two Tibetans, Choeyang Dorje and Palden Gyatso, may face ten year prison sentences if they do not pay fines totalling more than 2,000 US dollars each.

Choeyang Dorje and Palden Gyatso first travelled through Nepal in 2000 on their way from Tibet to India. In 2001 they returned to Nepal where they were arrested a year later, on 15 May 2002, initially on suspicion of stealing. Choeyang Dorje was arrested while on a religious retreat in Pharping and Palden Gyatso was arrested from his home in Baudha. While the Nepalese police did not find any evidence of theft, they discovered in the course of their investigations that Choeyang Dorje and Palden Gyatso did not have valid residence documents for Nepal. Like the other 11 Tibetans currently facing ten year sentences in Dilli Bazaar prison, they were charged with violation of article 3 (1) of the Nepalese Immigration Act (1992), which states: "No foreigner is allowed to enter or stay in the Kingdom of Nepal without a visa". The two were fined a total of 2,282 US dollars each, representing the visa fee and late visa fee, with failure to pay incurring a ten-year prison sentence. A 14th Tibetan, Tenpa Rabgyal, who was arrested on 28 January 2002, was released on 18 June, after the Office of Tibet in Kathmandu paid his relatively small fine of 174 US dollars. The fines are based on the length of time someone without valid residence

documents has stayed in Nepal. Tenpa Rabgyal was arrested soon after his arrival in Nepal, while the other 13 Tibetans had spent more days in the country before they were arrested. Moreover, their fines were based on a period including the time they were in India.

The Nepalese lawyer representing all 13 Tibetans has expressed concerns about the fact that his clients, none of whom speak Nepalese, were not provided with an interpreter during any stage of the interrogation process. All of them, except two, gave a negative answer when they were questioned as to whether they were likely to face persecution if they were to be returned to Tibet. As to the purpose of their stay in Nepal, they had all replied they wanted to visit and/or stay in Nepal, rather than being only in transit to India. It is unlikely that any of them understood the meaning or the legal significance of these questions.

Traditionally, Tibetans were able to cross the border to Nepal and stay for long periods of time without formal approval from the Nepalese authorities. After the People's Republic of China took control of Tibet's international

² See TIN's News Update of 15 February 2002

boundaries and with the modernisation of the Nepalese state, this liberal attitude was replaced by a system of formal procedures. That many Tibetans fail to comply with the procedures currently in place is partly due to a lack of awareness. But even for those who are aware, obtaining a passport from the authorities in Tibet can be a lengthy and difficult procedure with uncertain results, which could even put the applicant under political suspicion. The Nepalese government does not permit any Tibetans who arrived after 1989 to stay in the country. However, a 'gentleman's agreement' developed between the Nepalese authorities, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Tibetan Government-in-Exile, by which Nepalese authorities have tacitly allowed Tibetan exiles to transit Nepal en route from Tibet to India. Even though this unofficial scheme does not technically apply to Tibetans returning to Tibet from India (an exile by accepted definitions would not willingly return to their place of origin), Tibetans were in practice able to travel relatively freely through Nepal until late 2000, when a group of 19 Tibetans returning to Tibet was arrested in Nepal, levied with high fines and then imprisoned when they were unable to pay.³

Imprisonment for failure to pay a fine is highly questionable under international law. Article 11 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which Nepal has ratified, states: *"No one shall be imprisoned merely on the ground of inability to fulfil a contractual obligation."* Moreover, the European Convention on the Protection of Human Rights, the legal significance of which is widely acknowledged to reach beyond Europe, specifies that while detention for breach of a lawful order or to fulfil a legal obligation is lawful, the detention must be to contribute towards the obligation being fulfilled, rather than to punish for failure to comply. The protocol adds that inability to comply alone does not justify detention.

Many Tibetans passing through Nepal or residing in the kingdom do not possess official residence permits or a transit visa. Upon their arrival in the Tibetan Refugee Centre in Kathmandu, Tibetan newcomers are issued with an identity card which gives their personal details and states that *"the holder of this card is a person of concern to UNHCR"*, although it doesn't bear the UNHCR logo or contact details. A westerner working in Kathmandu told TIN: *"...because these permits are issued by the Tibetan Refugee Centre in Kathmandu, which is not an official body, they don't mean anything. (...) In fact, they are totally ineffectual and perhaps even detrimental as they create the illusion that there is some kind of protection and permission for Tibetans to be here, when actually they are still seen by the Nepalese government as illegal aliens and therefore breaking the law."*

A Tibetan in Kathmandu told TIN that he thought that by making these sporadic arrests, the Nepalese government, under pressure from China, is keen to show that it is sticking to its 1989 decision by which no more Tibetans would be allowed to stay in Nepal. Another Tibetan commented: *"If they [the Nepalese government] really want to enforce this [i.e. the 1989 decision], then many Tibetans in Nepal will face great problems, as many of them don't have proper papers."*

Prior to Democracy Day on 19 February, a date when the King traditionally pardons certain prisoners, the aforementioned 11 Tibetans unsuccessfully appealed for an amnesty. The group includes a mother with a 4-month old baby. There are concerns for the health of the mother, who is currently undergoing treatment in hospital. All 13 Tibetans now detained in Kathmandu aim to make a second appeal to the King on his birthday on 7 July.

TIN NEWS STORY

TIN NEWS UPDATE, 01 MAY 2002 (EDITED)

Tibet authorities encourage exiles to return

The Chinese authorities appear to be adopting new approaches to encourage Tibetans in exile to travel to Tibet. Many Tibetans living in exile have recently applied to go to Tibet under a scheme promoted by the Chinese Embassy in Kathmandu. This offers exiled Tibetans a permit to go to Tibet for a time period of one year, although not all of the applications have been granted. The introduction of the scheme follows a statement made in February by the Tibetan leader Pasang (known in Chinese as Basang), deputy secretary of the Tibet Autonomous Regional Committee of the Chinese Communist Party, welcoming *"patriotic overseas Tibetan compatriots"* to *"return to their home towns to visit family, relatives and friends, to worship Buddha"* and to go sightseeing" (Xinhua, 5 February). Pasang said that even Tibetans who had carried out *"splittist activity"* in the past would be welcomed, as long as they *"act in a manner that supports the motherland"*.

³ For more details on this case, see TIN's News Update of 15 February 2002.

⁴ "To worship Buddha in Tibet" is likely to be particularly meaningful to Tibetans in exile given the spiritual significance of elements of the Tibetan landscape and of the physical location of places of worship there. For instance praying at the Jokhang Temple or at the seat of the local deity in their village of origin would be considered by many Tibetans as particularly 'auspicious'.

The Chinese authorities introduced a system of offering permits to exiled Tibetans in the 1980s, when many Tibetans who had been living or were born in exile travelled to Tibet to meet relatives and see the country often for the first time. It became more difficult for Tibetans to obtain the permits from Chinese embassies in both India and Nepal from the mid 1990s onwards. The permits that have been on offer from the Chinese Embassy in Kathmandu recently allow for one entrance and one exit. The representative of the Dalai Lama in Kathmandu, Wangchug Tsering, told TIN: *"The Chinese authorities do seem to be making greater efforts to woo exile Tibetans back to Tibet."* It is not clear whether Nepal will allow Tibetans to re-enter the Kingdom when the permit for Tibet expires. Some Tibetans in Kathmandu told TIN that they would not apply for permits to go to Tibet because of concerns that their safety will not be guaranteed. Tibetans returning from exile have been detained and held in prisons or police stations on the Tibetan side of the border for varying periods from several days to several months, even though they were in possession of valid papers. The permit scheme does not appear to be currently in place at the Chinese Embassy in Delhi, India, where some Tibetans have been waiting months for permits to travel.

In some cases the Chinese Embassy in Kathmandu has specified that in order to receive this permit, applicants must hand in their 'Green Books', which are documents issued by the Tibetan government in exile to all Tibetans under their administration. One young Tibetan in Kathmandu told TIN: *"I would never give up my Green Book for a permit, because this would mean I had given up on the Tibetan community here and thrown in my lot with the Chinese."* According to one report from Kathmandu, the Chinese Embassy is still being selective in issuing the permits; a Tibetan in Kathmandu commented that business people appear to be favoured while some young educated Tibetans have been refused despite the Chinese authorities' claim that Tibet is upholding the policy that *"all Tibetan countrymen 'can return and leave freely'"* (Xinhua, 15 February). Posters have been put up in Tibetan areas of Kathmandu in recent weeks stating that the Chinese authorities are using the scheme for their own political ends, and that Tibetans should not apply for these permits to go to Tibet.

There is likely to be a combination of factors behind what appears to be a development in policy on Tibetans

travelling from exile into Tibet. China and Nepal have developed increasingly important trade links and it is in China's interest to facilitate travel between the two areas for business people, particularly in the light of the current drive to develop the western regions of China, including Tibet. Pasang, who is also director of the Tibet Autonomous Regional Committee for Receiving Returned Tibetans, said at a meeting in Lhasa on 4 February that the government *"welcomes overseas Tibetan compatriots contributing to the development of Tibet and their home towns. The government also welcomes them doing practical work for economic development and social progress in the motherland"* (Xinhua, 4 February). There is also inevitably a propaganda aspect behind the permit scheme. China keeps records of all Tibetans who return from exile using official Chinese-issued documents, and use this information for propaganda purposes. On 4 February Xinhua reported: *"All levels of Tibet's overseas Tibetan reception departments [departments set up by the local authorities] hosted overseas compatriots from more than 10 countries and regions, including India, Nepal, the United States, Switzerland, Sweden and others, with a total of 408 visits... They were thoughtfully provided with daily services such as transportation, room and board, medical and other services by all levels of Tibet's reception departments."* A second Xinhua piece published on 5 February on the official website www.tibetinfo.com stated that there are currently *"85 returned Tibetan compatriots living in the Lhasa area, most of whom returned in the 1980s and early '90s"*.

The authorities have made it clear, however, that there are certain conditions for exiled Tibetans wishing to travel to *"the motherland"*. Pasang said in her February statement that even Tibetans who have been involved in political activity *"in the past"* would be welcomed back by the authorities *"as long as they truly give up their stance of 'Tibet independence' and genuinely cease engaging in activities to split the motherland"* (Xinhua, 4 February). But she also warned that exile Tibetans who wish to visit their families in Tibet should *"act in a manner that supports the motherland"*, adding that: *"A small number of splittist elements take advantage of the opportunity to freely visit in order to carry out activities of splitting the motherland, and even make plans to provoke disturbance in Tibet. This is absolutely prohibited"* (Xinhua, 4 February).

OFFICIAL NEWS COVERAGE AND OTHER SOURCES**5 January 2002**

Ahead of Chinese Premier Zhu Rongji's visit to India, on 5 January the Dalai Lama said that the international community, especially India, should play a more active role in realising Tibet's long-standing demand for autonomy.

PTI news agency, New Delhi / SWB

8 January 2002

The Dalai Lama has reaffirmed his intention not to be reincarnated in Tibet or any other territory under Chinese rule. The Dalai Lama said if Tibet is not free when he dies, he will be reincarnated in some free country elsewhere.

Voice of America

8 January 2002

Replying to questions from reporters on 8 January, the Dalai Lama said the Tibetan people could accept genuine autonomy, leaving issues of defence and foreign ministries to China. He suggested that spiritual and religious leaders of all faiths should sit together and work for developing human value among the people by preaching non-violence.

PTI news agency, New Delhi

9 January 2002

On 9 January China announced that it had no plans to raise the Tibet issue and the question of the Karmapa Lama during the upcoming visit of Premier Zhu Rongji to India, because it is not a bilateral problem between China and India. The Indian government has previously made it very clear that they will not allow the Karmapa to be used by any foreign powers against China.

PTI news agency, New Delhi

15 January 2002

Indian police asked Tibetans not to demonstrate during Chinese premier Zhu Rongji's visit to the south Indian city of Bangalore visit on 15 January. Meanwhile, Tibetans have appealed to the south Indian state Karnataka's government to permit them to hold peaceful anti-Chinese demonstrations during Zhu's visit.

PTI news agency, New Delhi

16 January 2002

Hundreds of Tibetans held a 24-hour demonstration in Bombay to coincide with the Chinese premier Zhu Rongji's visit to the western Indian metropolis, in protest against Chinese aggression in Tibet. A number of Tibetans staged a demonstration outside the Prince of Wales Museum (rechristened as Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Vastu Sangrahalay) in Bombay on 16 January, moments before the Chinese premier Zhu Rongji arrived to visit the museum. Eighty-eight of the protestors, including 21 women and a child, were whisked away to nearby Colaba police station and detained under the Bombay Police Act. In another incident a young Tibetan protestor displaying a huge banner inscribed "Free Tibet", suspended himself

from the 10th floor of Hotel Oberoi, where the Chinese premier addressed industry captains. Elsewhere, other protestors went on hunger strike.

PTI news agency, New Delhi

31 January 2002

The Dalai Lama has been barred from speaking inside Australia's national parliament during a visit in May for fear of appearing to recognise his political role. The Australian government recognises the Dalai Lama as a significant spiritual leader, but does not recognise the Tibetan government in exile and views Tibet as part of China.

The New Zealand Herald

6 February 2002

China has urged Tibetans living in exile to return and offered general amnesty for their earlier support to the Dalai Lama's campaign for the independence of Tibet. It has been stated that anyone who no longer promotes or believes in the "independence of Tibet" would be welcome even though they may have previously engaged in separatist activities. China has also issued a fresh call to the Dalai Lama to renounce his struggle for Tibet's independence and return home.

PTI news agency, New Delhi

6 February 2002

In opposition to China's extreme population-control methods, U.S. President Bush is withholding \$34 million from the U.N. Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA), a body accused of assisting forced abortions and sterilisation operations in China. Beijing is hoping to restrict the majority of couples to one child for another generation.

Washington Post

14 February 2002

A religious rights group in the United States has published a set of internal Chinese government documents describing in remarkable detail the suppression of unauthorised religious groups, including efforts to crush underground Catholic churches, use of secret agents to infiltrate illegal Protestant congregations and orders for "forceful measures" against the banned Falun Gong spiritual movement. China allows religious activity, including Christianity, but only within the framework of state-authorised churches. Catholics attend Mass freely in the Beijing cathedral, for instance, but the officially sanctioned church takes orders from the government, not the Vatican.

Washington Post

10 March 2002

Sixty people, including members of the local Tibetan community, attended a demonstration outside the Chinese embassy in Moscow on 10 March, protesting against China's cultural and religious genocide in Tibet.

Ekho Moskvyy news agency, Moscow

TIBET INFORMATION NETWORK

The expenditure for the years ending 2001 and 2002 given in this Annual Report does not represent TIN's current budget (December 2003).

In December 2002 the Trustees of TIN restructured and streamlined TIN's operations on the basis of an annual core budget of around £250,000.

Throughout 2003, TIN was able to increase its level of output whilst developing new formats since our operations were more efficiently configured, in particular those relating to output. TIN has now adopted a flexible network structure with two components:

1. A core operation responsible for basic research and news production, coordination, fundraising and reporting, general administration, and non-public output (contact with governments and non-government agencies)
2. A pool of researchers and writers drawn from long-term contacts of TIN, with relevant expertise in a range of fields relating to contemporary Tibet, TIN employs these writers / researchers on a contractual (and sometimes voluntary) basis to contribute to TIN's public output (*News Updates*, *Special Reports* and *Publications*). This part of TIN's operations is financed on a project basis.

30 March 2002

A decision by the Australian Prime Minister, John Howard, not to meet the Dalai Lama during his forthcoming visit to Australia has been blamed on pressure from the Chinese Government.
 Sydney Morning Herald

31 March 2002

China's party paper Renmin Ribao has reported that some members of the European Parliament (MEPs) lacked a true understanding of Tibet because of the "negative publicity of the Dalai clique". However, the recent visit to Belgium by a Tibetan People's Congress delegation enabled MEPs to get to know the "real Tibet".
 Renmin Ribao web site, Beijing

5 April 2002

The preparatory committee for the UN World Summit on Sustainable Development has rejected the US proposal to accredit the Tibet Justice Centre (TJC) to the conference scheduled for 26 August – 4 September in Johannesburg, South Africa. The TJC openly advocates that the People's Republic of China is not the legitimate government of the Tibetan people. In February the committee rejected the accreditation of the International Campaign for Tibet (ITC) on the same grounds.
 Xinhua news agency, Beijing

12 April 2002

Australian Foreign Affairs Minister Alexander Downer has announced, "I welcome China's decision to release 76-year-old Tibetan prisoner Tanak Jigme Sangpo. Jigme Sangpo, a former schoolteacher, was released on medical grounds last week. Jigme Sangpo, one of China's longest-serving political prisoners, has spent a total of 32 years in prison since 1965."
 Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade web site, Canberra

19 April 2002

In a meeting with a visiting delegation from the Tibet Autonomous Region, Nepali King Gyanendra said that Nepal will always maintain good relations with China and will not allow anyone to conduct any anti-China activities within Nepalese territory. He also expressed his confidence that the friendship between China and Nepal will be further strengthened by the development of cultural and trade relations.
 People's Daily

24 April 2002

The Moscow authorities have refused permission to the Society of Friends of Tibet to hold a rally in support of the Tibetan Panchen Lama outside the Embassy of the People's Republic of China. Permission to hold the rally had been received in each of the last six years but this year unexpectedly permission was withheld.
 Ekho Moskvyy news agency, Moscow

29 April 2002

China and the European Union (EU) jointly launched a poverty-relief programme in Lhasa on 29 April, to assist 40,000 people in the rural area of Bainang of Tibet. The project, the first one of its kind launched by EU, is designed to develop nine poverty-relief projects and will concentrate on areas such as education, health and drinking water supply.
 Xinhua news agency, Beijing

14 May 2002

A spokesman for China's Foreign Ministry has reiterated that China opposes all foreign government meetings with Dalai Lama, and that China was opposed to the Dalai Lama's political activities in any capacity, and in any country or region.
 Xinhua news agency, Beijing

21 May 2002

The Australian government reiterated its one-China policy on 21 May, saying there is no need for Prime Minister John Howard to meet the Dalai Lama during his visit to Australia. Australia recognises both Tibet and Taiwan as provinces of China.
 Xinhua news agency, Beijing

28 May 2002

The Dalai Lama has been met with New Zealand political leaders including acting prime minister, Jim Anderton, despite pressure from China for them to boycott the visit. The New Zealand government has stressed that the meetings held with the Dalai Lama have been in his capacity as one of the world's spiritual leaders rather than as head of a Tibetan government-in-exile.
 Radio New Zealand National Radio audio web site, Wellington

12 July 2002

China and Nepal should and will have still closer ties, President Jiang Zemin told visiting Nepalese King Gyanendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev on 10 July during their first official meeting. Gyanendra said that Nepal would adhere to its friendly policy towards the nation and adhere to the "one China" principle. He stressed that Nepal would not permit its territory to be used as venues for any activity undermining China's interests. An agreement on trade between China's Tibet and Nepal was to be signed in order to greatly facilitate communication and cooperation between Tibet and Nepal.
 People's Daily

24 July 2002

Zhang Yishan, the deputy Chinese permanent representative to the United Nations has called for exchanges and cooperation in the field of human rights, voicing its hope that all countries will, through dialogue and exchanges on an equal footing, properly handle divergent views on the human rights issues.
 Xinhua news agency, Beijing

8 August 2002

The Cambodian government will not invite the Dalai Lama to attend the world religion conference to be held here later this year, local media reported Thursday. "We can't invite the Dalai Lama because our policy doesn't allow us to do that," Chhorm Eam, secretary of state for the Ministry of Cults and Religion, was quoted as saying. He reaffirmed that Cambodia follows Beijing's one-China policy. China Topnews

14 August 2002

Tibet wishes to promote cooperation with India in the economic field and in border trade, said Luosang Toinzhub, vice-chairman of the Tibet Autonomous Regional People's Government during a meeting with Nalin Surie, joint secretary of the Indian Foreign Ministry. Xinhua news agency, Beijing

19 August 2002

The Dalai Lama was refused an entry visa to visit Russia in September because of pressure exerted on Russia by China. The Russian Foreign Ministry decided the trip was inappropriate when, amid the religious aspects of the visit, the political essence began to manifest itself, namely the inclusion in the delegation of members of the so-called Tibetan government-in-exile. Ekho Moskvyy news agency, Moscow

19 August 2002

United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights Mary Robinson said that she is satisfied with the implementation of a two-year memorandum of understanding (MOU) on technical co-operations between her office and China aimed at furthering the promotion of human rights conditions in the country. China and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights signed the MOU in November 2000. China Daily

19 August 2002

The top UN Human Rights official today told reporters at the start of a UN-sponsored seminar for Chinese judges and lawyers that in China "the overall situation for human rights still gives cause for deep concern". Mary Robinson, who is preparing to end her term, cited a list of worries including the detention of Chinese labour leaders and pro-democracy activists, restrictions on Internet use, a crackdown on dissent in Muslim minority areas and the growing number of executions.

Associated Press

10 September 2002

A Tibetan delegation participating in the ongoing China's Tibetan Culture Week in Brussels has paid a visit to European Parliament and held a cordial and frank discussion with some Parliament members on Tibet issues. British MEP (member of European Parliament) Ingledwood said that he believed the culture week, designed to present a wide variety of programmes depicting the social and religious developments in Tibet, would contribute to the spreading of

Tibetan culture and to the improvement of the knowledge of the current development of the Tibetan society.

Xinhua news agency, Beijing

10 September 2002

Russian Buddhists and representatives of social organisations such as the Moscow Helsinki Group, and the Yabloko party, protested in front of the Russian Foreign Ministry against the decision not to grant the Dalai Lama an entry visa. One protestor pointed out that the Dalai Lama is a holder of the Nobel peace prize, and yet the Russian Foreign Ministry is treating him like a terrorist.

Ekho Moskvyy radio, Moscow

18 September 2002

The Tibetan parliament-in-exile has urged the Indian government to actively support the five-point peace plan offered by spiritual leader Dalai Lama for genuine autonomy for Tibet and its demilitarisation and denuclearisation to make the region a zone of peace, which would be in the larger interest of India from a security perspective. The vice-chairperson of the Assembly of Tibetan People's Deputies, Gyari Dolma, explained the concept of "genuine autonomy" as a right to "self-rule" with some areas such as defence, currency and external affairs left to Chinese regime. She also urged the United Nations to implement its general assembly resolution of 1959, condemning China's violation of human rights and calling for Tibetans' right to self-determination.

PTI news agency, New Delhi

3 October 2002

Professor Samdhong Rinpoche, the prime minister of the Tibetan government-in-exile, has issued a circular suggesting that "all Tibetans and friends of Tibet" should refrain from public protest when Mr Jiang visits the United States and Mexico later this month. The circular stated: "It will be a strong gesture for dialogue, non-violence and reconciliation during a time when the international community is threatened by terrorism, violence and war cries." The truce call was intended as a friendly gesture to President Jiang Zemin, but the real impact remains to be seen.

South China Morning Post (Business Post supplement), Hong Kong

25 October 2002

A delegation of Chinese Tibetan studies experts held talks with German parliamentarians in Berlin on Thursday 24 October. President of the human rights commission of the German federal parliament, Christa Nickels, said that it was necessary to hold similar talks in the future to help them better find out the history and the current situation in Tibet. She also stressed that the German government and people adhere to "one-china" policy and that Tibet is an inseparable part of the Chinese territory.

Xinhuanet

1 November 2002

China is warning Japan not to allow the Dalai Lama to stop over in Japan before proceeding on a visit to Mongolia from 4 November.

Japan is again expected to give the go-ahead to the stopover as it had allowed him nine times before to enter the country on condition he does not get involved in political activity.

Kyodo News Service, Tokyo

4 November 2002

Beijing has denounced the Dalai Lama's visit to Mongolia, which is due to begin today. The Foreign Ministry said the Dalai Lama was not simply a religious figure but was a political exile who had engaged in activities to split the motherland. A previous attempt to visit Mongolia was cancelled last year when Russia refused to give him a transit visa.

20 November 2002

Tibet's government-in-exile has urged the new Chinese leadership to start talks on the region's political future, hinting there may be an uprising if no progress is made by June. Samdhong Rinpoche, 63, prime minister of the exiled government told an audience at the Foreign Press Association in London that he was optimistic about

the prospect for negotiations after Hu Jintao became the new head of the Communist Party last week. He also hinted that if efforts for talks with Beijing on autonomy within the control of China elicited no response, there might be a popular uprising, saying that "the patience of a nation has limitations" and that they "could not wait for an unlimited time". Kesang Takla, of the office of the Tibetan exile administration in London, said there had been consistent calls for people in Tibet not to resort to violence, but that the situation could spin out of control if Beijing did not start talks.

23 November 2002

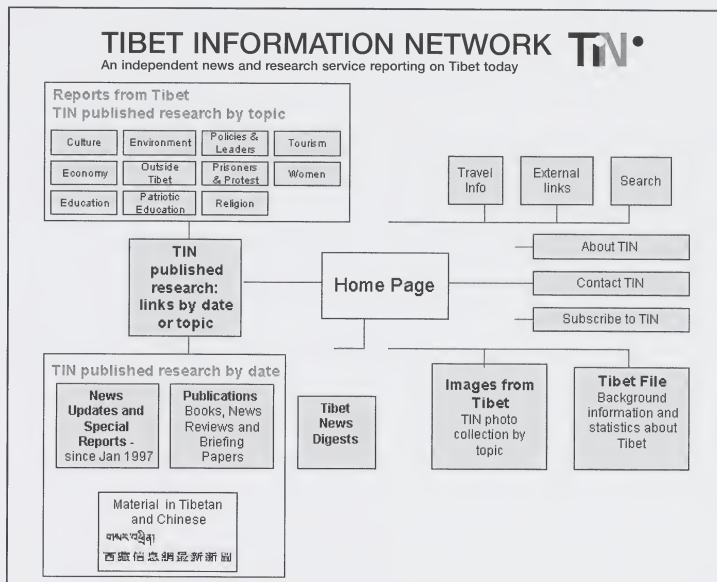
Sixteen Tibetan students were arrested on 23 November for allegedly vandalising the Chinese pavilion at the ongoing India International Trade Fair in New Delhi. According to police, the students broke several items and goods at the stall. A case has been registered for alleged breach of peace, rioting and obstructing public tranquillity.

PTI news agency, New Delhi

For current information on Tibet, please check regularly TIN's website:

www.tibetinfo.net

site map



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Tibet 1902-2001: a brief chronology

1902

Rumours reached the Viceroy of India, Lord Curzon, that the Russians had signed a secret treaty with the Tibetans. Preparations began for a military invasion.

1904

Colonel Francis Younghusband marches with 3,000 troops to Gyantse. The 13th Dalai Lama flees from the approaching army and shelters in Mongolia and in China. The British withdraw after signing the Anglo-Tibetan Convention which allowed them to have Trade Agents at Gyantse and at Gartok in Western Tibet.

1909

The Dalai Lama returns from exile. Chinese troops occupy parts of Kham (eastern Tibet) and the Dalai Lama appeals to Great Britain for assistance.

1910

The Chinese Army, with 2,000 troops led by Chao Erh-Feng, invades Tibet and enters Lhasa. The Dalai Lama flees to India.

1911

In Beijing the Qing (Manchu) Dynasty is overthrown and the Republic of China is established under Yuan Shih-Kai, who declares Tibet, 'Xinjiang' (East Turkestan) and Mongolia to be provinces of China.

1912

Throughout the country Tibetans rise up against the Chinese.

12th August: The Chinese troops sign a surrender agreement with the Tibetans, and are obliged to return to China via India.

1913

The Dalai Lama returns to Lhasa and issues a formal Proclamation of Independence.

1914

Tibet, Great Britain and China attend the Simla Convention and prepare an agreement to settle the Sino-Tibetan border dispute. The Chinese government later refuses to ratify the agreement.

1920

Sir Charles Bell is sent to Lhasa to reassure the Tibetans of British support for its self-rule and self-defence.

1923

The Panchen Lama disputes his tax liability to the Tibetan Government and flees to China.

1933

Thubten Gyatso, the 13th Dalai Lama, dies in Lhasa at the age of 58.

1937

The Panchen Lama dies in Jyekundo on the Chinese border.

1940

Tenzin Gyatso, the 14th Dalai Lama, is enthroned at Lhasa.

1941-44

Tibet remains neutral during the Second World War and refuses permission for the Americans or the Chinese nationalists to transport military supplies through Tibetan territory.

1947

Tibet sends a Delegation to discuss trade and to open formal relations abroad, to India, China, Britain and the USA.

Tibet is nearly plunged into civil war when the former Regent Rating, supported by the monks of Sera, attempts a coup d'état.

1949

In China the People's Liberation Army overcome the Nationalists (Guomintang) and on 1st October proclaimed the People's Republic of China.

The 10th Panchen Lama, then 11 years old, telegrams Mao Tsetung asking him to "*unify the motherland*". The PLA announces its intention to "*liberate Tibet from foreign imperialists*".

1950

The 14th Dalai Lama, then 15 years old, takes over the running of the Government.

October 7th: Chinese troops invade Tibet and destroy the small garrison force at Chamdo in Kham (Eastern Tibet). The Tibetan Government and the Dalai Lama move to Yarlung, close to the Indian border, and send appeals for help to the United Nations. The British and the Indian delegates there persuade the Assembly not to discuss the matter.

1951

The Tibetans sign under duress the 17-Point Agreement, promising cultural and political autonomy but relinquishing independence.

1957

Revolt in Eastern Tibet when Chinese troop begin attacking monasteries and imposing collectivisation. Birth of the Tibetan resistance movement and of the Voluntary National Defence Army. Chinese troops driven out of southern Tibet.

1959

10th March; national uprising against the Chinese rule. Thousands of Tibetans take to the streets in Lhasa and fight the Chinese troops. When the Chinese start to shell his residence in Lhasa the Dalai Lama flees to India, 100,000 other Tibetans escape with him.

The PRC imposes a military government, fronted by the Panchen Lama, and begin the forced communalisation measures known as 'democratic reforms'. A large number of Tibetans are executed, imprisoned, or sent to labour camps. Destruction of monasteries begins.

1965

The Cultural Revolution begins, with the systematic destruction of most monasteries and declared attempts to eradicate Tibetan 'backwardness'.

1976

The Cultural Revolution ends with the death of Mao. The Chinese leadership acknowledges '*past mistakes in Tibet*', but blame them on the Cultural Revolution and on the ultra-leftist policies of the Gang of Four.

1979

China, facing economic collapse, initiates a policy of opening up to the outside world. The Dalai Lama is invited to return from exile, on condition he remains in Beijing. He is allowed to send a fact-finding mission to Tibet. The delegates are greeted by huge demonstrations calling for independence and the return of the Dalai Lama; many demonstrators are imprisoned.

1980

Party Secretary Hu Yaobang visits Tibet and initiates a series of liberalisation measures allowing some private trade, outward display of religious activities, and the recall of several thousand Chinese cadres.

1983

The Tibetan economy, depleted by Chinese development policies, is re-centred on tourism. At the same time the first signs emerge of a renewed attempt by Beijing to encourage the resettlement of Chinese people in Central Tibet.

1987

The Dalai Lama proposes a Five Point Peace Plan during a visit to the US Congress in Washington.

October 1st: Police open fire on unarmed demonstrators calling for independence in Lhasa. Over 21 other demonstrations are reported in the next eighteen months. Up to 100 feared dead from police shootings, and over 2,000 arrested.

1988

The Dalai Lama puts forward the Strasbourg Proposal, offering the Chinese control of Tibetan foreign policy and defence in return for full internal autonomy. China promises to negotiate with him.

1989

March 5th: police open fire and kill another group of demonstrators in Lhasa. The demonstrations spread and at midnight March 7th martial law is declared. The People's Liberation Army takes over the city and all foreign tourists, journalists and diplomats are expelled. One Chinese source cites 256 people killed by security forces; thousands believed to have been arrested. Tibet is cut off from the outside world.

October: the Dalai Lama is awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

1990

April: many monks and nuns are expelled from monasteries; demolition and rebuilding of old city of Lhasa speeded up. Martial Law is lifted on May 1st, but varying restrictions on foreign visitors and journalists remain in force. Small demonstrations continue in the capital but most are dealt with rapidly by increased presence of armed police.

Dalai Lama officially received by Swedish, Dutch, and French Governments, and privately by Czech and German Presidents. November: European Parliament appoints Rapporteur on Tibet.

1991

March: In the run up to the 32nd anniversary of the National Uprising on 10th March, the Chinese authorities crackdown on the Tibetan population, major sentencing rallies are held in public with several thousand local people in the audience.

April: US President George Bush meets the Dalai Lama for the first time in a major shift in US policy on Tibet. China makes strong protests against the meeting.

August: 1,000 Tibetan Refugees, chosen by lottery, are admitted to the United States.

August: The United Nation Sub-commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities passes a resolution criticising China's continuing violations of fundamental human rights and freedom in Tibet, the first UN resolution on Tibet in 25 years. China's ambassador to

the UN, Fang Guoxian, announces immediately that the PRC considers the resolution "null and void" and that it would not be binding on China. A delegation from the European Parliament makes a four days visit to Lhasa

October: The Chinese Foreign Ministry declares that the Dalai Lama can return to Tibet under condition that he "stops his activities aimed at splitting China and undermining the unity of its nationalities, and abandon his position on Tibetan independence."

October: US President, George Bush, signs a bill passed by the US Congress declaring Tibet an illegally occupied country whose true representatives are the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan Government in exile.

1992

February: The USA refuse to support a UN resolution criticising China's human rights record in Tibet, but in March The US Senate unanimously adopts a resolution urging the Bush administration to support Tibetan human rights in all appropriate international forums.

March: The UN rejects a motion criticising China's policies in Tibet.

May: Four demonstrations take place within a week in Lhasa, allegedly due to discontent with the 'socialist education campaign'.

June: China reiterates they are willing to discuss any issue with the Tibetans except total independence.

July: China introduces laws to encourage investments in the TAR, especially by foreign capitals and overseas Chinese investors, as well as by Chinese citizens from inland China.

September: 'Hardliner' Chen Kuiyuan replaces Hu Jintao as Communist Party Secretary in Tibet.

December: Part of the military headquarters for South Western China is to be shifted to Tibet from near Chengdu. A major construction project is underway to host the new headquarters, 10 kilometres south west of Lhasa.

1993

March: A UN resolution expressing concerns over the human rights situation in Tibet is proposed by 23 countries but fails to pass when China uses a technical device to avoid a censure motion.

April: US President Clinton meets with the Dalai Lama and calls for the negotiations between Beijing and the Tibetan leader to resume.

May: The EC delegation to Tibet on a human rights fact-finding mission suspends the visit after the Chinese authorities confirmed that two Tibetans, Gendun Rinchen and Lobsang Yonten, preparing to contact the delegation, were arrested in Lhasa shortly before the delegation's arrival.

May: Major outbreak of unrest in Lhasa involving 2-3,000 Tibetans. Increase in political unrest in rural areas especially in Northern and Eastern Tibet during June and July. Large wave of arrests throughout Tibet.

May: US President Clinton announces that China will only be awarded 'Most Favoured Nation' trading status in 1994 if it improves its record in human rights.

July: Tibet-China negotiations officially resume, the elder brother of the Dalai Lama, Gyalo Thondup, holds talks with Chinese senior officials in Beijing. By September the negotiations come to a complete standstill.

September: The European Parliament adopts a resolution calling on China to release Gendun Rinchen, Lobsang Yontan and Damchoe Pamo. The EU declares that China should not be awarded the Olympic Games for the year 2000, expressing grave concerns about reports of human rights violations. It states relations between EU and China should not be determined only by economic interests, but should be dependent on respect of human rights and democracy.

October: 14 nuns serving their term in Drapchi prison, Lhasa, have their sentences doubled or tripled for recording a series of songs calling for the independence struggle to continue. They made the tape recording secretly in the prison and managed to smuggle it out.

1994

January: The Chinese authorities impose a limit on the number of Tibetans allowed to become monks or nuns.

January: Chinese authorities release Gendun Rinchen and Lobsang Yontan following an international campaign by human rights organisations and diplomats of the European Union.

March: China wins for the fourth year running a move that no action should be taken on the UN resolution criticising its human rights record.

May: US President Clinton decides to renew Most Favoured Nation trading status to China, despite Beijing's failure to meet the criteria, ending de facto any linkage between MFN and human rights.

July: Third National Forum on Work in Tibet is held in Beijing. It has crucial consequences on the strategies for dealing with political dissents and results in an increase in repressive policies and political imprisonment. China's top leaders call for an anti-Dalai Lama campaign to be launched.

September: The first 'Patriotic Education' campaign is launched, initially in schools and designed, particularly in areas like Tibet, to teach children 'firm opposition to separation, safeguarding the unity of the motherland, enhancement of national unity'.

October: Begin of a ban on photographs of the Dalai Lama

November: For the first time China allows a UN human rights official to visit its territory.

December: The UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention calls for the release of 61 political prisoners, among which are 39 Tibetans

1995

January-March: Pro-independence demonstrations in Lhasa and elsewhere: 125 arrests are reported during the first three months of 1995.

May: The Dalai Lama announces that he has recognised six-year-old Gendun Choekyi Nyima as the reincarnation of the Panchen Lama. China reacts with profound hostility to the announcement, launching an aggressive campaign against the Dalai Lama. The Chinese authorities initiates a purge of the leadership of Tashilhunpo monastery in Shigatse: Chadrel Rimpoche, abbot of the monastery and responsible for the procedure of recognition, is arrested. A new leadership of lamas traditionally supportive of the Chinese authorities is installed.

June: In the run up to the 30th anniversary of the founding of the TAR the first of a series of political bombings takes place in Lhasa, but the Tibetan authorities do not admit to any explosions until the launch of the Strike Hard campaign in May 1996.

November: Chinese authorities announce that they will not recognise Gendun Choekyi Nyima as the 11th Panchen Lama and they will proceed by appointing their own choice of reincarnation.

November: Gylatsen Norbu, a six years boy from northeast Tibet, is declared by the Chinese authorities to be the new Panchen Lama. Gendun Choekyi Nyima's whereabouts and those of his family are unknown.

1996

May: The national 'Strike Hard' campaign against crime is launched in Tibet.

June: China admits for the first time that it is holding the missing Tibetan child, Gendun Choekyi Nyima, regarded by most Tibetans as the 11th reincarnation of the Panchen Lama. The UN asks that a delegation be allowed to visit the seven-year-old boy, whom Beijing says is being held to prevent him from being kidnapped by Tibetan nationalists.

September: Launch of a new and more severe 'patriotic education' campaign in monasteries and nunneries throughout Tibetan areas.

November: A Spiritual Civilisation campaign, embracing socialist values, is announced by Chen Kuiyuan to promote cultural and ideological progress, by eliminating the Dalai Lama's influence in the spiritual field.

1997

February: Death of Deng Xiaoping.

March: First-ever visit of the Dalai Lama to Taiwan, meeting with President Lee Teng-hui. 21 April: Intermediate Court in Shigatse sentences Chadrel Rimpoche, former abbot of Tashilhunpo monastery, to six years in prison for his role in handling the search two years ago for the reincarnation of the Panchen Lama and "colluding" with the Dalai Lama.

June: TAR secretary, Chen Kuiyuan, declares that Tibetan culture should be seen as separate from Tibetan

Buddhism.

October: A UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention visits Drapchi prison in Lhasa and interviews ten inmates, but later fails to mention a protest, that took place during the visit and that led to the arrest of three prisoners and extensions to their sentences of between three and ten years.

Madeleine Albright, US Secretary of State appoints Gregory Craig as Special Coordinator for Tibetan Affairs at the US Department of State.

1998

May: On the occasion of the visit by an EU delegation, protests in Drapchi prison led to the most severe repression since the imposition of Martial Law in 1989. At least ten prisoners died following beatings and torture by prison guards.

Legchog replaces Gyaltsen Norbu as chairman of the TAR regional government in a reshuffle of the top leadership in the Tibet Autonomous Region following the seventh TAR People's Congress in April. Legchog's appointment further strengthens the authority of Ragdi, who himself has been re-elected chairman of the standing committee of the TAR People's Congress.

July: The expulsion of several members of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference (CPPCC) indicates the authorities' determination to deal with 'splittism' by increasing Party control at local level and installing loyal cadres in key political positions.

September: The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mary Robinson, visits China and Tibet.

1999

January: TAR Party propaganda launches a drive to promote atheism, to "*free the people from the negative influence of religion.*"

June: Gyaltsen Norbu, the boy recognised by the Chinese authorities as the 11th Panchen Lama, arrives in Lhasa, and on 21 June, is taken to the Tashi Lhunpo monastery in Shigatse for the first time since his appointment in 1995.

August: Several incidents of dissent in Lhasa during the festivities marking the Sixth National Minority Games.

October: A large protest erupts in Kardze, Sichuan Province, with several hundred people gathering outside Kardze detention centre to demand the release of Khenpo Sonam Phuntsog, an influential senior religious figure, and two other monks, who had been arrested a week before.

2000

January: Ogyen Thinley Dorjee, the 17th Karmapa and head of the Kagyu tradition arrives in Dharamsala after escaping from Tsurpu monastery on December 28, 1999 to seek religious freedom in India.

July: China rejected World Bank conditions and withdrew its request for a \$40 million loan for a controversial project involving the resettlement of nearly 58,000 poor farmers,

less than 10% of whom are Tibetan or Mongol, from eastern Qinghai into a traditionally Tibetan and Mongolian area of Qinghai province incorporating Xiangride town. Beijing announced it would carry out the project *"in its own way"*, according to China's World Bank Executive Director Zhu Xian.

September: Beijing announced on 16 October that Chen Kuiyuan, the secretary of the regional committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC) of the Tibet Autonomous Region, has been replaced by Guo Jinlong.

2001

February: China has made significant revisions to its law on 'national minorities' in order to bring it into line with new policies to accelerate economic development in the western regions of China, including the Tibet Autonomous Region and Tibetan areas in the Chinese provinces of Sichuan, Qinghai, Yunnan and Gansu. Chinese President Jiang Zemin signed an order to amend the 1984 Regional National Autonomy Law at the China's National People's Congress on 28 February, according to a Xinhua report. The amendments will focus on the development of autonomous regions according to the Party's political and economic priorities and the further integration of these areas into the rest of China. The new legislation appears to strengthen the rights of the state as opposed to the rights of autonomous peoples.

March: The Dalai Lama began his second visit to Taiwan. He is received by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, not the Interior Ministry as during his first visit. Meetings with

president Chen Shui-bian, vice-president Annette Lu and Lee Teng-hui.

Spring: China starts the construction of the Qinghai-Tibet railway, which is planned to link Golmud with Lhasa by 2007.

June: Fourth Tibet Work Forum held in Beijing focuses on three key aspects of Tibet policy: strengthening Party building, propelling the economy from *'accelerated development'* to *'a leap over' model of development'* with continued state investment and subsidy; and bringing the social situation forward from *'basic'* to *'long-term'* stability. The direction of policies announced at the Forum appears to be towards further assimilation of Tibet into the wider Chinese economic and cultural model.

July: China's Vice-President Hu Jintao participates in celebrations marking the 50th anniversary of Tibet's *'peaceful liberation'* in Lhasa.

Beginning of a crackdown on the Buddhist institute of Serthar, Kardze Prefecture. A significant number of nuns as well as all Chinese students are expelled from the institute. The head and founder of the institute, Khenpo Jigme Thegchok is removed from the institute under unclear circumstances.

August: Samdhong Rinpoche is declared the winner of the first-ever popular election of the Prime Minister of the Tibetan government in exile. This is deemed a significant step in the Dalai Lama's transfer of power to other democratically elected Tibetans. It is also seen as a preparation for a post-Dalai Lama situation.

Overview of the Tibetan Population in the PRC from the 2000 Population Census

General Figures

The following table is a summary of the entire Tibetan population in China as well as in each of the provinces with Tibetan Autonomous areas. The column 'other' signifies Tibetans living in inland China, such as in Beijing and Shanghai, or abroad, such as resident Tibetans studying in Europe or North America.

The horizontal total is the total of all Tibetans in each province, with the first entry representing the entire population of Tibetans within China; 5,416,021. Because most of these Tibetans are permanently resident in Tibetan areas, the provincial population figures for the Tibetans are likely to be fairly accurate, as opposed to a mobile migrant population, such as the Chinese in Tibetan areas, the Sichuanese in Shanghai, or the Zhejiangese in Beijing.

The vertical columns represent the break down of the Tibetan population according to city, town, and rural, as per census definitions. 'City' in this case represents a city with a population greater than an amount of 500,000, i.e. Lhasa in the case of the Tibet Autonomous Region. 'Town' represent small cities, towns, and rural administrative centres that have been designated as towns. The bottom row of the column is the rate of urbanisation in each province, that is, the percentage of the population living in urban areas defined in the census as 'city' and 'town'.

These statistics confirm what is often observed informally; that Tibetans are overwhelmingly rural. On average, throughout the Tibetan regions, 87 percent of Tibetans are rural, living in neither cities nor towns, large or small. Interestingly, the rate of urbanisation among Tibetans in the TAR (15 percent of Tibetans living in cities or towns) is higher than the average of the Tibetan population throughout the PRC while the lowest is in Qinghai (8.5 percent of Tibetans living in cities or towns). This might be partially due to definitional distinctions between 'small town' and 'rural'. In Sichuan, very few Tibetans (one percent) live in cities, which here would represent Chengdu, while a significant proportion (9.5 percent) were living in towns, which probably represents the prefectural and county towns in the Tibetan areas. Tibetans in Yunnan were the most urbanised within the traditional Tibetan regions at 20 percent, most of these in towns. The high rate of urbanisation among the 'other' category represents the fact that Tibetans migrating out of the Tibetan areas would mainly do so in order to live in cities such as Beijing, Shanghai, etc.

Total population of Tibetans in the PRC according to the 2000 census

	Total	TAR	Sichuan	Qinghai	Gansu	Yunnan	other
Total	5,416,021	2,427,168	1,269,120	1,086,592	443,228	128,432	61,481
<i>subtotals</i>							
City	221,355	141,551	11,951	20,714	18,534	2,740	25,865
Town	473,467	227,606	120,788	72,981	21,652	22,988	7,452
Rural	4,721,199	2,058,011	1,136,381	992,897	403,042	102,704	28,164
City/Total (%)	4.1%	5.8%	0.9%	1.9%	4.2%	2.1%	42.1%
Town/Total (%)	8.7%	9.4%	9.5%	6.7%	4.9%	17.9%	12.1%
Rural/Total (%)	87.2%	84.8%	89.5%	91.4%	90.9%	80.0%	45.8%
<i>rate of urbanisation</i>							
City+Town/Tot.	12.8%	15.2%	10.5%	8.6%	9.1%	20.0%	54.2%

Source: Table 1-6, 1-6a, 1-6b, 1-6c, Population by sex, nationality and by province, from Tabulation on the 2000 Population Census of the People's Republic of China, China Statistical Press, 2002.

Breakdown by Province and by other ethnicities

Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR)					
	Total	Tibetan	Chinese	Hui ¹	other ²
Total	2,616,329	2,427,168	158,570	9,031	21,560
<i>subtotals</i>					
City	217,779	141,551	69,799	4,881	1,548
Town	290,547	227,606	56,270	2,316	4,355
Rural	2,108,003	2,058,011	32,501	1,834	15,657
City/Total (%)	8.3%	5.8%	44.0%	54.0%	7.2%
Town/Total (%)	11.1%	9.4%	35.5%	25.6%	20.2%
Rural/Total (%)	80.6%	84.8%	20.5%	20.3%	72.6%
<i>rate of urbanisation</i>					
City+Town/Total	19.4%	15.2%	79.5%	79.7%	27.4%

(1) The Hui are often known as Chinese Muslims.

(2) The category 'others' is about one half made up of Molpa and Lhoba (Tib.: Monpa and Lhopa), who are closely related to Tibetans.

Several features from this table confirm common observations from the field; while Tibetans tend to be overwhelmingly rural, the Chinese and Hui (Chinese Muslims) are concentrated in the cities and towns, with only 32,501 Chinese and 1,834 Chinese Muslims actually residing in the rural areas, versus over 2 million Tibetans.

There are controversies over the figures of Chinese in the province, and, indeed, the figures reported above seem to be significantly underestimated. It is often estimated that the non-military population of Lhasa is currently about 300,000, of which half or more are Chinese. This would imply that the non-military Chinese population in Lhasa alone is 150,000 or more, equal to the entire Chinese population in the province reported in the census of 2000, as recorded above. Assuming that most of the underestimation takes place in Lhasa and a few regional cities such as Shigatse, Tsetang and Chamdo, leaving the Chinese population in the rural areas unchanged, it is conceivable that, according to such estimates, the population of non-military Chinese in the entire province would be currently around 250,000. The accuracy of these informal estimates is, however, unclear, as it depends on the season being considered. Both Chinese and Tibetan populations go through huge seasonal fluxes, with many Chinese leaving during the winter months, (November to February) It is therefore quite probable that 160,000 Chinese is a reasonable estimate for the year-round resident Chinese, while the higher informal estimates would pertain to the resident population during the summer months. (See appendix).

From the above table, the shares of each ethnic group in each category can be calculated as follows:

Percentage of each nationality in the total population of the TAR				
	Tib./total	Chinese/total	Hui/total	other/total
Total	92.8%	6.1%	0.3%	0.8%
<i>subtotals</i>				
City	65.0%	32.1%	2.2%	0.7%
Town	78.3%	19.4%	0.8%	1.5%
Rural	97.6%	1.5%	0.1%	0.7%

This again reveals that in 2000 the rural population of the TAR was almost exclusively Tibetan at 97.6 percent. This seems an accurate measure because the Chinese population is underestimated in the urban areas, not in the rural areas.

Sichuan (Kham)						
	Total	Tibetan	Chinese	Yi ¹	Qiang ²	other
Total	82,348,296	1,269,120	78,229,697	2,122,389	300,757	426,333
<i>subtotals</i>						
City	12,210,543	11,951	12,087,206	32,575	5,902	72,909
Town	10,099,836	120,788	9,805,035	92,392	31,708	49,913
Rural	60,037,917	1,136,381	56,337,456	1,997,422	263,147	303,511
City/Total (%)	14.8%	0.9%	15.5%	1.5%	2.0%	17.1%
Town/Total (%)	12.3%	9.5%	12.5%	4.4%	10.5%	11.7%
Rural/Total (%)	72.9%	89.5%	72.0%	94.1%	87.5%	71.2%
<i>rate of urbanisation</i>						
City+Town/Total	27.1%	10.5%	28.0%	5.9%	12.5%	28.8%

(1) The Yi are found in some Tibetan regions and are thus included here, albeit most of them live outside the Tibetan areas.

(2) Though considered separately in the PRC nomenclature, the Qiang are often considered to be Tibetans.

The population of the Tibetan regions in Sichuan is difficult to decipher at a provincial level of aggregation because the province is essentially split in half; the western half made up of Tibetan regions with a very low population density of less than 20 people per square kilometre, and the eastern half made up of densely populated Chinese regions with a population density of over 300. Thus, most of what is represented in the statistics is the Chinese half. Nonetheless, the rates of urbanisation reveal significant differences between the different nationalities; Tibetans are much less urbanised than the Chinese at 10.5 percent versus 28 percent, and most of these urbanised Tibetans live in towns, not cities. However, their rate of urbanisation is higher than the Yi who are only 6 percent urbanised, with 94 percent living in the rural areas.

Percentage of each ethnic group in the total population of Sichuan					
	Tib/total	Chinese/total	Yi/total	Qiang/total	other/total
Total	1.5%	95.0%	2.6%	0.4%	0.5%
<i>subtotals</i>					
City	0.1%	99.0%	0.3%	0.0%	0.6%
Town	1.2%	97.1%	0.9%	0.3%	0.5%
Rural	1.9%	93.8%	3.3%	0.4%	0.5%

Qinghai (Amdo)						
	Total	Tibetan	Han	Hui & Salar	Tu & Mongol	other
Total	4,822,963	1,086,592	2,606,050	840,421	273,863	16,037
<i>subtotals</i>						
City	997,053	20,714	810,398	142,679	13,914	9,348
Town	562,420	72,981	353,951	107,279	24,722	3,487
Rural	3,263,490	992,897	1,441,701	590,463	235,227	3,202
City/Total (%)	20.7%	1.9%	31.1%	17.0%	5.1%	
Town/Total (%)	11.7%	6.7%	13.6%	12.8%	9.0%	
Rural/Total (%)	67.7%	91.4%	55.3%	70.3%	85.9%	
<i>rate of urbanisation</i>						
City+Town/Total	32.3%	8.6%	44.7%	29.7%	14.1%	80.0%

Qinghai has the most complex ethnic mixture in the Tibetan areas. Here the Hui (Chinese Muslim) and the Salar (another closely related group of Muslims, but of Turkic origin) are calculated together as part of a larger Muslim diaspora. Similarly, the Tu (a group of Tibetanised Mongols) and Mongolians are calculated together as part of the non-Tibetan Buddhist groups, closely integrated into the pan-Tibetan Buddhist diaspora.

There is a large discrepancy in the total population of Qinghai, and after the post-census survey was conducted, the total was corrected to 5.18 million, representing a discrepancy of 6.8 percent, the largest in China. It is not clear where the discrepancy lies, but it must be remarked that a comparable rate of discrepancy is not uncommon in Western countries.

In contrast to Sichuan, Tibetans are the least urbanised nationality of Qinghai at 8.6 percent, despite the fact that the province has a higher than average rate of urbanisation among the western provinces. In contrast, the Chinese are almost half urban, more than two thirds of which are based in the city (mostly Xining), while the Chinese Muslims are about 30 percent urban. The urban Tibetans are mostly concentrated in towns and not in the city. Similar to the case in Sichuan, this means that when Tibetans urbanise, they tend to migrate to the local county town rather than to Xining.

Percentage of each nationality in the total population of Qinghai

	Tib/total	Chinese/total	H&S/total	T&M/total	other/total
Total	22.5%	54.0%	17.4%	5.7%	0.3%
<i>subtotals</i>					
City	2.1%	81.3%	14.3%	1.4%	0.9%
Town	13.0%	62.9%	19.1%	4.4%	0.6%
Rural	30.4%	44.2%	18.1%	7.2%	0.1%

The city category, mostly Xining, is Chinese at 80 percent, with the remainder mainly composed of Chinese Muslims, and very few Tibetans. The distribution is more evenly spread within the towns, while in the rural areas, the combination of all of the 'minority nationalities' exceeds the population of Chinese (55.8 percent versus 44.2 percent), and the combination of Tibetan, Tu, and Mongolian is more than double the Chinese Muslims (37.6 percent versus 18.1 percent) and approaching the number of rural Chinese (37.6 percent versus 44.2 percent).

Gansu (Amdo)

	Total	Tibetan	Han	Hui	Dongxiang	other
Total	25,124,282	443,228	22,925,063	1,184,930	451,622	119,439
<i>subtotals</i>						
City	3,937,322	18,534	3,690,775	191,851	8,888	27,274
Town	2,081,095	21,652	1,950,974	84,762	7,866	15,841
Rural	19,105,865	403,042	17,283,314	908,317	434,868	76,324
City/Total (%)	15.7%	4.2%	16.1%	16.2%	2.0%	22.8%
Town/Total (%)	8.3%	4.9%	8.5%	7.2%	1.7%	13.3%
Rural/Total (%)	76.0%	90.9%	75.4%	76.7%	96.3%	63.9%
<i>rate of urbanisation</i>						
City+Town/Total	24.0%	9.1%	24.6%	23.3%	3.7%	36.1%

Note: The addition of the Salar to the Hui and the Tu and Mongolians to the Tibetans would only marginally increase the percentages of Tibetans and Muslims in Gansu.

Similar to Qinghai, the rate of urbanisation of the Tibetans in Gansu is less than 10 percent, although it is not the lowest in the province as the Dongxiang are exceptionally rural, at only 3.7 percent urban. The Chinese population is also one of the most rural in the PRC, but they are mostly concentrated outside the Tibetan areas, around Lanzhou and in the south-east of the province.

Percentage of each ethnic group in the total population of Gansu

	Tib./total	Chin./total	Hui./total	Dong./total	other./total
Total	1.8%	91.2%	4.7%	1.8%	0.5%
<i>subtotals</i>					
City	0.5%	93.7%	4.9%	0.2%	0.7%
Town	1.0%	93.7%	4.1%	0.4%	0.8%
Rural	2.1%	90.5%	4.8%	2.3%	0.4%

Yunnan (Kham)

	Total	Tibetan	Han	Hui	Yi	others ¹
Total	42,360,089	128,432	28,201,274	643,238	4,705,658	8,681,487
<i>subtotals</i>						
City	4,652,662	2,740	3,974,832	104,478	202,698	367,914
Town	5,250,176	22,988	3,863,037	117,624	341,891	904,636
Rural	32,457,251	102,704	20,363,405	421,136	4,161,069	7,408,937
City/Total (%)	11.0%	2.1%	14.1%	16.2%	4.3%	4.2%
Town/Total (%)	12.4%	17.9%	13.7%	18.3%	7.3%	10.4%
Rural/Total (%)	76.6%	80.0%	72.2%	65.5%	88.4%	85.3%
<i>rate of urbanisation</i>						
City+Town/Total	23.4%	20.0%	27.8%	34.5%	11.6%	14.7%

(1) 'others' includes groups such as the Miao, Yao, and Zhuang, the latter being the most populous minority nationality in China.

Yunnan, like Sichuan and Gansu, has a heavy population concentration outside the Tibetan regions, and in terms of the surface they occupy, the Tibetan regions only make up a small part of the province. Also, the Tibetans are more urbanised than the other large minorities in the province.

Percentage of each ethnic group in the total population of Yunnan

	Tib./total	Han./total	Hui./total	Yi./total	other./total
Total	0.3%	66.6%	1.5%	11.1%	20.5%
<i>subtotals</i>					
City	0.1%	85.4%	2.2%	4.4%	7.9%
Town	0.4%	73.6%	2.2%	6.5%	17.2%
Rural	0.3%	62.7%	1.3%	12.8%	22.8%

On the Chinese population count in the TAR

There may be several reasons for the relatively low count of Chinese in the Tibet Autonomous Region:

1. The military are not included in any of the provincial level statistics in China, yet they are likely to represent a significant proportion of the visual Chinese in Lhasa and other cities and towns;
2. The census was taken on the 1st November. Much of the Chinese population in the province is seasonal and would have left for home by that time. Notably, most of the informal population observations coming from tourists, NGO workers and researchers are also made during the summer months. The figure of 160,000 may therefore be a reasonable count of the number of non-military Chinese who actually stay in the TAR year-round.

3. Informal estimates taken in the summer are likely to overestimate the number of Chinese because of tourism. Most of the 7-800,000 Chinese tourists who visit the TAR every year do so in the summer months. The tourist population at any given time between May and September is therefore likely to be quite considerable.

Arguments are often made that census figures hide the real numbers of Chinese because they do not include migrant workers or temporary residents in the head count. It is, however, important to make a distinction between the population censuses, which do attempt to count temporary residents and migrants, and the population surveys, which only rely on a sample of permanent residents in order to estimate the changes in population between the census years. In addition, to add further confusion, the concepts of residency and registration are not synonymous, and the census includes a category for people who have not been registered and therefore have an undetermined residency status.

Thus, the only people that the census would not include are those that literally or effectively hide while the census is being conducted; there is no reason inherent in the design of the census why temporary migrants would not be included. Because of the heightened security situation in the TAR, the ratio of security personnel per person is much higher than elsewhere in the PRC, allowing for a much greater ability to control and monitor the population. It is therefore quite likely that the census in the TAR might have made a better count of the vagrant population than elsewhere in the PRC. Indeed, post-census surveys often reveal significant discrepancies in census population counts in both inner China and elsewhere, but the discrepancy for the TAR is very small, almost insignificant, reinforcing this latter point.

Glossary

Amdo (*Tibetan A mdo*) – one of the three provinces or regions (*mchod kha gsum*) traditionally considered to constitute Tibet. The area is now largely within the Chinese province of Qinghai, and was divided into semi-independent principalities, not ruled by Lhasa in recent times. Tibetans from the area have their own distinctive dialect and cultural traditions and are known as Amdowas.

CC – the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party. Chinese: *dang zhong yang*, Tibetan: *tang krung yang*.

CCP – the Chinese Communist Party, founded in Shanghai in July 1921. The Chinese term is *Zhongguo gong chan dang*; in Tibetan the term is not translated but is rendered phonetically as *krung go gung bran tang*.

cheng guan qu (Chinese) – metropolitan district; administrative term for the inner urban area within a municipality (Chinese: *shì*) or county which is administered by its own town or city government. In the case of Lhasa the *cheng guan qu* is at a level of government below the municipality, making it equivalent to a county. Tibetan: *tran gong chu* or similar.

CPPCC – the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference. First convened in 1949, the CPPCC is an institution consisting of representatives of non-Party organisations that support the Party. In nationality areas it includes leading religious figures and former aristocrats who support the Party ('patriotic upper strata'). It is the main public organ for the United Front (q.v.) and meets regularly to express support and sometimes to comment on Party policies. Tibetan: *Krung go mi dmangs chab srid gros mol tshogs* 'du, or, more simply, *chab srid gros* (chab si drow).

Cultural Revolution – the campaign initiated in 1966 by Mao Zedong in order to regain control of the Party by ordering the youth to "bombard the headquarters" (purge opponents within the Party) and to eradicate 'the Four Olds' (old ideas, old culture, old customs and old habits). The Chinese authorities now describe it as 'the Ten Bad Years', referring to the entire period from 1966–1976, although technically it lasted only about two years. In Tibet it is sometimes considered to have continued until 1979. Tibetan: *rigs nas gsar brje*.

Democratic Reforms – Party term for the implementation of radical reforms, particularly redistribution of land, initiated from the early 1950s in Kham and Amdo and from March 1959 in the TAR, where it followed the March 1959 Uprising. Chinese: *minzhu gaige*, Tibetan: *dmangs gtso'i bcas sgyur* (mangtso choegyur).

Dharamsala – hill station in Himachal Pradesh, Northern India, currently the seat of the Dalai Lama and of the Tibetan Government in exile.

dratsang (*Tibetan grwa tsang*) – a college within a major monastery or monastic university, usually composed of khamtsen, units accommodating monks from one area.

Ganbu (Chinese) – cadre. The term is often used to refer to any member of the Party who holds a responsible position, but technically also applies to any non-Party member who holds a responsible position in the Government. Tibetan: *las byed pa* (le che pa).

Gelugpa (*Tibetan dge lugs pa*) – the dominant school of Tibetan Buddhism, sometimes called the 'yellow hat' school. Founded in the 15th century by Tsongkhapa, and led since the 17th century by the Dalai Lamas.

Gong An Ju (Chinese) – Public Security Bureau (PSB); local-level police force. Tibetan: *shbyi sde chu* (Chi de chu). The regional-level department of the PSB is referred to in Chinese as the *Gong An Ting* (Tibetan: *shbyi sde thing*), and the national-level ministry of the PSB is called the *Gong An Bu*.

Geshe (*Tibetan dge bshes*) – a monk or lama who has completed the highest course in metaphysics and other academic monastic studies in the Gelugpa school of Tibetan Buddhism; similar to a doctor of theology in western countries.

Gonpa (*Tibetan dgon-pa*) – monastery.

Kagyupa (*Tibetan bka' rgyud pa*) – the school of Buddhism originating in the 11th century, and now led by the Karmapas, whose traditional seat is at Tsurphu, eight kilometers west of Lhasa.

Kham (*Tibetan kham*) – eastern province of Tibet as traditionally conceived, ruled mainly by local rulers rather than by Lhasa. Most of Kham lies to the east of the Driчу (Yangtse river) and is now divided between Sichuan and Yunnan Provinces; a small part including Chamdo and Drayab lies to the west of the Driчу and is now within the Tibet Autonomous Region. Tibetans from the area have their own dialect and customs and are known as Khampas.

Jokhang (*Tibetan*) – the most sacred temple in Tibet, situated in the Tibetan quarter or Old City of Lhasa, usually referred to in Tibetan as the *Tsug lag khang*.

Labrang (*Tibetan bla brang*) – the residence or estate of a Trulku (q.v.) or Lama, and the patrimony inherited by his successors. Also used to refer to the court or advisers around a senior Lama. Also the name of the town (called Xiahe or Labuleng in Chinese) surrounding the prominent Gelugpa monastery of Labrang Tashikyiel in Amdo, in present-day Gansu Province.

laogai (Chinese) – reform through labour [camp]; equivalent to a prison. Inmates in a *laogai* have undergone a court trial and received a sentence for a criminal offence. Holds prisoners convicted of more serious offences than those committed by *laojiao* detainees. A *laogai* or prison inmate may be sentenced to death or up to 20 years imprisonment.

laojiao (Chinese) – literally, education through labour. A *laojiao* centre is a reform through education camp which houses detainees who have received administrative sentences, usually up to a maximum of four and a half years, from a committee without a trial.

Monlam (Tibetan: *smoṅ-lam*) – literally a prayer, but usually a short form of Monlam Chenmo, the Great Prayer Festival, traditionally held during the third week of the New Year at the Jokhang Temple in Lhasa. It was banned by the Chinese authorities in 1966, reinstated in 1986, and has been banned as a public ceremony since 1989.

Nyingma-pa (Tibetan: *nying ma pa*) – the oldest of the four main schools of Tibetan Buddhism, generally associated more with individual practitioners, often travelling ascetics or tantric yogis, than with monastic institutions.

PAP – People's Armed Police. See *Wu Jing*

Peaceful Liberation – Party term for the PLA's entry in 1950 into what is now termed the Tibet Autonomous Region. Tibetan: *zhi wa'i bcings bkrol* (shiwei ching drol).

Prefecture – the administrative area below the level of a province or region and above the level of a county. (In the TAR: Chinese: *diqu*, Tibetan: *sa-khul*.) The TAR is divided into seven prefectures, each of which is divided into seven or more counties. A 'Tibetan autonomous prefecture' (Chinese: *Zangzu zizhizhou*, Tibetan: *khru'u*) is a prefecture officially designated as Tibetan and located outside the Tibetan Autonomous Region (all are predominantly Tibetan-populated areas).

procuracy – A Chinese judicial agency which is responsible for investigating and prosecuting criminal cases. It also handles complaints against the police, prison officials and other branches of the administration. Tibetan: *zhīb chu*, Chinese: *jiancha jiguan*.

PSB – Public Security Bureau. See *Gong An Ju*

qu (Chinese) – district. The term can be used for a district at any level, but is often applied to an administrative area larger than a township (*xian*) but smaller than a county (*xian*). Tibetan: *chu*

Rinpoche (Tibetan *rin po che*) – literally, precious. A term of respect added to a lama's name.

shuji (Chinese) – secretary. The term is used only to refer to the secretary or leading member of a committee in the Chinese Communist Party, at any level. Tibetan: *hru'u ci*.

TAR – the Tibet Autonomous Region; the Tibetan area west of the Driчу (the Yangtse river) and south of the Kunlun mountains. This is

the only area recognised by modern-day China as 'Tibet'. The area was formally constituted as an 'autonomous region' in 1965. Tibetan: *Bod rang skyong ljongs*; Chinese: *Xizang Zizhiqu*.

ting (Chinese) – a government department or office at the level of a province or autonomous region; below a *bu* (Ministry or Bureau at state level, Tibetan: *pu'u*) and above a *ju* (local office or department, Tibetan: *chu*). Tibetan: *thing*.

truklu (Tibetan *sprul sku*) – literally, 'manifestation body'. In Tibetan Buddhism an incarnate lama, ie. a person believed to have achieved a level of spiritual ability allowing them to choose to be reborn as a human in order to help others. In China the term is mostly translated incorrectly as 'living Buddha'.

turing (Tibetan *kru ring*) – modern Tibetan term for the appointed foreman or leader of a committee, from the Chinese term *Zhuren*.

u yon lhan khang (Tibetan): committee, based on the Chinese term *wei yuan hui*. Sometimes used as a short form of *sa ngas u yon lhan khang* (sa ne u yon lhen khang), the neighbourhood committee (the grassroots level administrative unit for local residents who are not members of a work unit). In a monastery, for example, it is used as an abbreviation to refer to the 'Democratic Management Committee'.

United Front Department – the organ of the Party devoted to forming broad 'alliances' with non-Party and often with non-Chinese sectors of society, particularly by co-opting members of the 'patriotic upper strata' to get them to acknowledge the supremacy of the Party. See also CPPCC. Chinese: *Tong zhan bu*, Tibetan: *'thab phyogs goig sggyur* (thabchog chiggyur).

U-Tsang (Tibetan *dbus gtsang*) – the traditional name for the two areas of central Tibet including Lhasa and Shigatse respectively.

Wu Jing (Chinese) – People's Armed Police, a paramilitary unit formed from the People's Liberation Army in 1983, responsible for internal security, border controls, and the protection of state installations, including prisons.

xian (Chinese) – county, the middle level administrative unit. Tibetan: *shen* or *dzong*.

xian (Chinese) – township. The lower level administrative unit, formerly covering a township, but in rural areas covering a group of villages. Tibetan: *shang*.

cun (Chinese) – village.

Xikang – the province created by the Chinese Nationalists (Guomintang Party) in 1939 to describe Kham (q.v.), or at least those parts of it which lie to the east of the Driчу (the Yangtse). In 1955 Xikang province was dissolved and the area absorbed into Sichuan.

Xizang (Chinese) – the Chinese term for Tibet, referring only to the area now defined as the Tibet Autonomous Region.

Zang or Zangzu (Chinese) – the Chinese term for the Tibetan race.

(in the Chinese Government).

zhang (Chinese) – head or leader (of an organisation) – Tibetan: *drang* [krang] or *go* 'khrîd (gotrî). Eg., Tibetan: *shang drang* is the head of a 'xiang', *pu'u krang* (budrang, from the Chinese *buzhang*) is a Minister

zhuxi (Chinese) – Chairman or Governor, the highest level official within a government or legislative body, at any level. Tibetan: *kru'u zhi*.

Administrative Terms

Each of the four bodies at regional level (the Party, the two legislative-type bodies (the Congress and the CPPCC) and the government) has a committee as its highest organ. The Party committee is headed by a secretary (*shuji*), and legislative and governmental committees are headed by a chairman (*zhuxi*). Party committees may also have an executive deputy secretary (*changwei fushuji*) and deputy secretaries (*fushuji*).

The committee at the top of the legislative-type bodies will have a number of deputy chairmen (*fuzhuren*). Government committees have, below the chairman (*zhuxi*) or governor (in the case of an autonomous region) or governor (in the case of a province), a vice-chairman (*fuzhuxi*), an executive deputy chairman (*changwei mishuzhang*) and a secretary general (*mishuzhang*).

Below the committees, a number of subsidiary bodies are formed to carry out administrative responsibilities. The Party and the government have committees (often translated as commissions) and departments; the legislative bodies have committees and working groups. Party departments have heads (*buzhang*), and Party committees have chairmen (*zhuren*). Government departments at regional level are headed by regional directors (*tingzhang*), who may have deputy directors (*futingzhang*).

At prefectural level, the Party again operates through committees and their heads (*zhuren*). Government at this level is headed by a Commissioner (*zhuan yuan*), who may have a number of Deputy Commissioners (*fuzhuanyuan*). Below them, governmental responsibilities are divided between departments (*ju* or *chu*, the latter being used for public or state security departments), the general office (*bangongshi*) and committees. Departments and the general office have heads (*juzhang/chuzhang* and *zhuren* respectively) and deputy heads (*fujuzhang/fuchuzhang* and *fuzhuren* respectively). Committees also have heads (*zhuren*) and deputy heads (*fuzhuren*).

At county level, government is headed by a county head (*xianzhang*), who may have a deputy county head (*fuxianzhang*). Responsibilities are divided between departments (*ju*), which have heads (*juzhang*) and deputy heads (*fujuzhang*), the general office (*bangongshi*) that has a head (*zhuren*) and a deputy head (*fuzhuren*), and committees, which have heads and deputy heads (*zhuren* and *fuzhuren*).

Abbreviations

ACYF	All China Youth Federation
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
CMC	Central Military Commission
CPPCC	Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference
CYL	Communist Youth League
Dept.	Department
DIC	Discipline Inspection Committee
Exec.	Executive
NPC	National People's Congress

PAP	People's Armed Police
PLA	People's Liberation Army
PRC	People's Republic of China
Pref.	Prefecture
PSB	Public Security Bureau (Gong An Ju)
TAC	Tibetan Autonomous County
TAR	Tibet Autonomous Region
TAP	Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture

Travel to Tibet

Although tourism is one of the 'pillar industries' designated by the Tibetan authorities to speed up development in the area, travel in Tibet is still complicated. Travelling to Tibet often means facing bureaucratic hurdles, physical and altitudinal challenges and the absence of most modern amenities that are taken for granted in the west. But once one surmounts these challenges, Tibet holds the potential for a very special travelling experience. The following notes describe some of the basic rules and regulations regarding

which areas of Tibet may be visited, and how to get there.

All information in these notes is subject to change in accordance with any new restrictions or regulations introduced. For regular updates, please consult the page 'Travel to Tibet' on TIN's website (<http://www.tibetinfo.net/tibet-file/visas.htm>). The latest information of which TIN is aware are outlined there in the section entitled 'Current Situation'.

Which Tibet?

When they speak of 'Tibet', Tibetans tend to use the word to refer to a much larger area than that delineated by the Chinese authorities. For the government in Beijing and for most Chinese people, the word 'Tibet' (Chinese: *Xizang*) refers to the central and western parts of traditional Tibet – that is, the area west of the Driчу (Yangtse) river. In 1965 the Chinese government renamed this area the 'Tibet Autonomous Region' (the TAR), with Lhasa as the capital of this region.

Most Tibetans use the term 'Tibet' to include all the areas traditionally inhabited by Tibetans. This includes the traditional areas of Kham and Amdo. The Chinese authorities redefined these areas in the 1950s as parts of the provinces of western Sichuan and Qinghai; they are not part of the TAR. A small part of eastern Amdo falls into the province of Gansu. The southern tip of Kham is now in Yunnan province. There is no word in the Chinese language that describes this larger Tibet, which includes Kham and Amdo as well as the TAR. Chinese people therefore can refer to these areas only as 'parts of' Qinghai or Sichuan.

In these notes we use the word 'Tibet' to refer to the whole Tibetan area including both the TAR and the eastern Tibetan areas of Kham and Amdo. One should note that tourism policies and regulations are often different in the TAR from those in the Kham and Amdo areas of Tibet. Generally, travel in non-TAR areas of Kham and Amdo is easier, as most of the stringent travel restrictions imposed on TAR do not apply there.

The Basic Situation

The simplest way to summarise all the rules about travelling to Tibet is that the Chinese Government clearly prefers tourists to join a tour group with a guide. But China is apparently reluctant to present Tibet as 'closed' to individuals, nor does it wish to antagonise some small local traders who depend on individual travellers for their income. As such, individual travel is possible, albeit with certain difficulties and drawbacks. The result is a mixture of rules and policies, which changes constantly and which are applied with varying levels of zeal.

Due to these factors the easiest way to visit Tibet may be to join a tour group. This could be more expensive, and usually means that the itinerary will be pre-planned and restricted. Yet, group travel has certain up-sides such as cutting through permit obstacles and general red-tape, and a variety of trekking and expedition options that are out-of-the-question for individual travellers.

However, it is possible most of the time to travel in Tibet as an individual, although this could prove to be quite complicated, requiring extra time and patience to reach the country and to arrange any excursions outside the main towns.

'Open' Areas

The Chinese authorities constantly revise their list of places open to tourists. However, in recent years, the number of 'open areas' has considerably increased. Tourists wishing to travel in any newly opened area are advised to get a copy of the relevant documents in Chinese announcing the fact that these places are now open, because it can take some time for official changes to reach local authorities.

The main 'open' areas in Tibet are as follows, listed by their Tibetan spelling with Chinese equivalents in brackets:

In the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR):

Lhasa Municipality

All counties, including Namtso Lake, are open but access to places within Lhasa Municipality, for example Garden and Reting Monasteries, may be restricted.

Shigatse (Xigatse) Prefecture

Shigatse (Xigatze), Gyantse (Jiangzi), Nyalam (Nielamu) county (includes the border town of Kasa, also known as Dram (Zhangmu)), Everest base camp

Lhoka (Shannan) Prefecture

Nedong (Naidong) county (includes Tsethang).

Nagchu (Naqu) Prefecture

Nagchu (Naqu) county

Ngari (Ali) Prefecture

Senge Tsangpo (Gar), Burang, Mt. Kailash

Nyingtri (Linzhi) Prefecture

Menling, Nyingtri

Chamdo (Changdu, Qamdo) Prefecture

Chamdo county

This list is subject to change. Open areas may be temporarily closed to foreigners by order of the authorities. In the lists below counties that are not open are listed in square brackets. The following abbreviations are used:

TAP = Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture; MTAP = Mongolian and Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture; AC = Autonomous County

Qinghai Province

Tsoshar (Haidong) TAP

Tsongkhar (Ping'an) county, Drotsang (Ledu) county, Bayan Hui (Hualong Hui) AC, Dowi Salar (Xunhua Salar) AC, Kumbum (Huangzhong) county [Gonlung Tu (Huzhu) county] AC, Kamalag (Minhe) county, Tongkor (Huanguyan) county]

Tsojang (Haibei) TAP

Kangtsa (Gangca) county [Semnyi Hui (Menyuan Hui) AC, Hiyan/Dashi (Haiyun) county, Chilen (Qilian) county]

Huangnan (Malho) TAP

All counties

Tsolho (Hainan) TAP

Chabcha (Gonghe) county, Trika (Guide) county, Gepasumdo/Thunte (Tongde) county, Tsigorthang (Xinghai) county [Mangra (Guinan) county]

Golog (Guoluo) TAP

Machen (Maqin) county, Chigdril (Jiuzhi) county, Mateo (Maduo) county [Gade (Gande) county, Pema (Baima) county, Darlag (Dari) county]

Kyegudo (Yushu) TAP

Kyegudo (Yushu) county [Tridu (Chengduo) county, Nangchen (Nangqian) county, Zatoe (Zaduo) county, Dritoe (Zhido) county, Chumarleb (Qumalai) county]

Tsonub (Haixi) MTAP

Golmud (Ge'ermu) City, Wulan county, Tulan (Dulan) county [Themchen (Tianjun) county, Golmud County except Golmud City]

Gansu Province

Dingxi Prefecture

Tongwei, Longxi, Wei yuan [Dingxi, Huining, Jingyuan, Lintao]

Wudu Prefecture

Whole Prefecture

Gannan TAP

Sangchu/Labrang (Xiahe) county, Machu (Maqu) county, Drugchu (Zhuoqu/Zhugqu) county, Tewo (Diebu) county [Lintan county, Chone (Zhuoni/Jone) county, Luchu (Luqu) county]

Wuwei Prefecture

Wuwei City, Minqin [Jingtai, Pari (Tianzhu) TAC, Gulang, Yongchang]

Linxia Hui AP

Linxia City, Yongjing [Dongxiang, Jishishan, Guanghe, Kangle, Hezheng]

Sichuan Province

Wenjiang Prefecture

[All counties closed]

Ya'an Prefecture

Ya'an city, Lushan, Mingshan, Tianquan, Baoxing [Yingjing, Hanyuan, Shimian and Ya'an except for Ya'an city]

Ngaba (Aba) TAP

Barkham (Ma'erkang), Dzoeg (Ruo'ergai), Zungchu (Songpan), Hungyon/Kakhog (Hongyuan), Namphel (Nanping), Maowun (Maoxian) Qiang AC, Lungu (Wenchuan), Tashiling (Lixian), Tsenlha (Xiaojin) [Trochu (Heishui), Chuchen (Jinchuan), Dzamthang (Rangtang), Ngaba (Aba)]

Kandze (Ganzhi/Garze) TAP
All counties open

Liangshan Yi AP
Xichang City, Mili (Muli) TAC, Ningnan, Huili, Puje, Butuo, Jinyang, Leibo, Meigu [All other counties closed]

Yunnan Province

Lijiang Prefecture
All counties open

Nujiang Lisu A.P.
All counties open except Bijiang

Deqian/Degen (Dechen) Tibetan A.P.
All counties open

Places along all the main roads linking these and other open areas are open or sometimes described as 'semi-open', which means that the police might allow tourists to stay there for a short time.

Places along the main road between Lhasa and Nepal, and the main road between Lhasa and Golmud, are open or 'semi-open'.

Most of the areas with major tourist attractions (such as Gyantse, Sakya and Samye) were in effect open to individual tourists until about 1995. However, this opening was not official and since 1996 they seem to have become 'closed' – but this seems to be largely a device to allow funds to be collected by charging fees for issuing permits, which are easy to obtain for these areas. Nevertheless, one should obtain a permit from the nearest open town even for these well-known tourist areas before arriving in them; otherwise tourists may be charged a much higher fee as a penalty.

The Chinese authorities have recently added new places to the list of open areas in Tibet – especially in Kham and Amdo. This can be checked with local officials or on the pinboards displayed in all major tourists hotels.

In order to visit the non-tourist or 'closed' areas of Tibet one can either join a group, or gain a special permit, or walk or hitch there (illegally) as a trekker. A tourist with cash can pay a local tour company to obtain the permits to take him or her almost anywhere in Tibet, but it may be expensive

and one may need to be accompanied by a guide and driver. Individuals often enter closed areas without permission, but this may lead to small penalties and problems. The main penalty may only be immediate expulsion from the area, but could also include a fine, confinement to the hotel and confiscation of camera film. More importantly, it could also cause serious problems for any Tibetans tourists have associated with.

Groups

When joining a group instead of travelling as an individual, one can go to all open places and to many other closed places.

A 'group' can consist of one person – in other words, one travels as a single tourist but pay much more than an individual tourist. It is worth bearing in mind that groups organised from Kathmandu, are officially restricted to a minimum of five tourists, although the penalty for travelling in a group of four is not severe. In addition, a guide and a driver must be hired, a pre-agreed itinerary is followed and the group is likely to have to stay in smart and restrictive hotels. One can usually insist on having a Tibetan guide, who may know more about the area than a Chinese guide. Sometimes it is possible to travel with just a driver. One advantage of traveling with a Tibetan guide is that he may speak English, whereas the driver is unlikely to speak English. Some Western out-fitters have been allowed to use their own trucks and drivers on the way from Kathmandu to Lhasa, on to Dunhuang and Kashgar, and down to Islamabad. Unlike the individual tourist, one may be able to visit closed areas without any difficulties. Moreover, groups can take advantage of a better array of trekking and expedition choices that individuals can only dream of. However, a supervised group travel is much more expensive and one gets a limited overall perspective of life in Tibet.

Groups should be planned and arranged before arriving in Tibet through a travel agent outside China or Tibet; the most flexible and experienced may be in Kathmandu – but they may not have the connections to arrange permits for travel in Eastern Tibet, outside the TAR. It is also possible to fax in advance directly to a travel agency in Lhasa or Chengdu which will send a driver and a guide on arrival, together with the appropriate permits. To visit a difficult or closed area near the borders with India, a travel agency which has connections with the military will be preferable, since permits for such areas are issued by the army. The PLA had its own travel agency called Golden Bridge, with branches in Hong Kong and Chengdu, but in 1998 the armed forces were ordered to cease involvement in business activities and hand over any commercial ventures to central and local governments.

Individual travellers

The authorities in China describe an individual traveller as an 'FIT' – a 'foreign individual traveller'. Until 1996 a FIT could quite easily succeed in reaching Lhasa without joining a group. Currently, however, although most FITs are allowed to enter the eastern edges of Tibet as FITs, in order to travel to Lhasa or to the inner areas of Tibet they must join a group of some sort. Officially, independent or individual travel to Tibet is prohibited but individual travel is possible with varying degrees of complexity and inconvenience.

There are several different entry points to Tibet. The main routes are by bus from Golmud or the Nepalese border to Lhasa or Shigatse, or by plane from Chengdu, Kathmandu, Xining or Guangzhou, via Zhongdian, to Lhasa. On 28 July, 2003 China Southern Airlines launched Lhasa-Guangzhou flights, via Zhongdian (renamed Shangri-la) on Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays, but it is not yet known whether foreign tourists are able to use this route. High paying groups can mount treks to Lipu Lekh (Uttaranchal) and Shipkila (Himachal Pradesh) from the Indian side. The opening of new trade and pilgrimage routes along the Indo-Tibetan and Nepal-Tibetan borders such as Nathula (Sikkim), Nyoma (Ladakh) and Nangpala and Kyirong (Nepal) have been negotiated, although individual tourist passage through these routes is years away. Even then, high paying group tours may not entirely be impossible.

Generally speaking it is easier to join a group to travel to Lhasa if one wishes to go by road. It is possible to join a notional group at Golmud or the Nepal border for the purpose of the journey and disband in Lhasa, although this depends on restrictions at the time. When entering Tibet on a group visa one may be able to have this replaced by an individual visa issued by the local police in order to travel as a FIT once the group disbands.

To travel by plane from Chengdu or Kathmandu, tourists mostly need to show that they are members of a group. From Chengdu documentation proving one is part of a group will probably be required in order to buy the plane ticket. As with travelling to Lhasa by bus, one may be able to leave this group on arrival; the situation is similar when flying from Kathmandu but there do appear to be more restrictions on this route. Coming from Kathmandu tourists most certainly need to stay with the group until the itinerary is completed, which will probably be after several days. For staying in Tibet or China once the tour is finished the travel agency in Kathmandu must be informed while applying to join the group.

Travel by public bus in Tibet is now believed to be possible without permits only on the road from Lhasa to Shigatse and on the road leading out of Tibet to Golmud in the

neighbouring province of Qinghai (although going in the opposite direction on the same road – into Tibet – is strictly controlled). For other places one may need to obtain a permit before buying a bus ticket.

In relaxed periods, individual travel will probably be easier and travellers may encounter no problems, especially if they stay within well-known tourist and pilgrim routes. It may also be slightly easier within the counties of the Lhasa Prefectural area: Lhasa Inner City (Lasa Chengguanqu), Toelung Dechen (Duilongdeqing), Chushur (Qushui), Nyemo (Nimu), Tagtse (Dazi), Maldrogongkar (Mozhugongka), Lhundrub (Lingzhi), and Jamshung (Dangxiong).

All foreign tourists in China, including FITs, are obliged to stay only in specially designated hotels. In Lhasa there is a large number of these hotels which can accept foreigners, but in most other places there are apparently very few. Travellers cannot assume to be entitled to accommodation in all hotels or boarding houses – the police may have forbidden a certain hotel from allowing foreigners to stay there.

Visas

Almost all PRC Embassies issue individual visas for China, which can be used for Tibet. Generally, the closer the Embassy is to China, the longer the visa they can issue. For instance, the PRC Visa Issuing Office (Formerly the PRC Embassy) in Hong Kong, which is considered by some as the best place to get a visa, gives a 3-month visa for 80 US dollars, even a 6-month visa, in two working days (but recently this visa has become more difficult to obtain); Hanoi gives a 3-month visa; Islamabad, 2-month; and New Delhi, mostly 1-month, but a 2-month visa is possible. It is important to make sure that the visa starts to run on the date of issue, especially the visa from Hong Kong. When purchasing a visa it is advisable not to mention the intention to travel to Tibet or Xinjiang; Chinese consulates in Australia, England and several other countries are believed to have denied visas to travellers who have mentioned Tibet as a destination or as their port of entry on their visa application forms. For a complete list of Chinese Embassies and Consulates world wide, the web-site of the PRC Ministry of Foreign Affairs should be visited at www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng.

It is mostly impossible to obtain an individual visa for China from the Embassy in Kathmandu unless one has a proof of a ticket to China (that is, not to Tibet). These visas usually specify that they are not valid for travel in the TAR. Group visas can be obtained through tour operators.

An individual visa should say "L" at the top corner; this means tourist (Chinese: *luyouzh*), family visitation or other personal reasons. An "F" Visa is issued to an applicant

who is invited to China for visit, research, lecture, business, scientific-technological and culture exchanges or short-term advanced studies or intern practice for a period of no more than six months; A "Z" Visa is given to an applicant who is to take up a post or employment in China, and their accompanying family members; An "X" Visa for the purpose of study, advanced studies or intern practice for a period of six months or above; "C" Visa to crewmembers on international aviation, navigation and land transportation missions and family members accompanying them. "J-1" Visa is Issued to foreign resident correspondents in China; "J-2" Visa to foreign correspondents on temporary interview mission in China; "G" Visa for transit transit through China; and "D" Visa is given to some one who is to reside permanently in China.

Prior to the introduction of new regulations in 1999 it had been possible to extend a tourist visa for a short period from within Tibet. Now it is virtually impossible to get an extension inside TAR, especially Lhasa. If at all possible, one would be required to produce proof of departure at the end of the extension, such as a flight ticket to Kathmandu. Some travellers have had more luck through travel agents in Shigatse. A tourist visa could be extended at the "Foreign Affairs Section" of the Public Security Bureau (PSB) in most major cities in China, including Chengdu, Xining and Kunming.

It is irresponsible to travel in Tibet without a valid entry visa, because it could endanger Tibetans with whom one has associated. Walking across a border is particularly dangerous and unjustifiable, since one may be assumed to be a spy if found without a stamped entry visa. This could have very serious implications for any Tibetan one has met or spoken with.

To enter Tibet, it is often necessary to obtain a special permit as well as a Chinese visa. The 'Tibet Permit', which most travellers do not see, is a piece of paper with the group itinerary and some times the names of the group members. Permits can normally be obtained through travel agencies specialising in Tibet tours, the most reliable of which are said to be in Chengdu. It is also possible to arrange a permit with an agency in Lhasa and have it sent before entering the TAR. When travelling in a group, it is advisable to carry a photocopy of the group permit in case one becomes separated from the group.

Alien Travel Permits

Local police may give special permits to individuals wishing to travel to closed areas. These are called Alien Travel Permits (ATPs). In some places ATPs may be issued on condition that tourists be accompanied by a guide. The police in Lhasa also issue ATPs and seem to be alone in being able to issue them for places outside their

prefecture. However they usually only offer ATPs to groups who have arranged a tour with a registered tour operator. Permits are apparently quite easily obtained for well known places such as Mount Kailash – but they may be expensive and/or must to be obtained through a travel agent.

In 1993 an increasing number of individual travellers were fined for arriving without an ATP in well-known but technically closed places like Kailash or Samye. At that time these routine fines were small – they were then really just fees for a permit – and usually the traveller could stay for a while in the area once these fines had been paid. Since 1996 the fines have become much larger, so it may be advisable to get a permit from the nearest open town before travelling to one of these places. Much larger fees appear to be charged on mountaineering routes used by groups in vehicles, notably at Rongbuk checkpoint leading to Everest base camp.

In 1997 the Tibet authorities produced a new regulation, which required all travellers leaving Tibet by air from Gongkar airport (Lhasa) to hand back their ATPs at the airport. Most travellers do not have an ATP (they are often retained by a tour group guide or were never needed), and so could not hand them back. These travellers were fined US \$10 for not handing back their ATPs.

For certain areas an ATP may not be sufficient – other permits from the Tibet Tourism Bureau or the army may be needed as well, especially in border areas, the east and west TAR, Ngaba (Aba) prefecture and parts of Nyingtri prefecture. Travellers are usually required to hire a guide for these areas. Permits for military areas may only be obtained by a travel agent. These are classified as secret documents, and not usually shown to the foreigner.

Accommodation: general information

As elsewhere in China, legal accommodation for foreign tourists is restricted to government approved lodgings. Some monasteries also have a number of approved rooms. The hotels and monasteries listed in the accommodation sections of guidebooks should be government approved. Outside major cities like Lhasa, Shigatse, Gyantse, Tsethang etc. it is best not to expect too much in terms of the quality of accommodation. Plumbing and other modern amenities may not be available especially outside of the major cities. Regulations promulgated in 1999 require that travellers book their initial accommodation in Lhasa with a tour operator before entering the TAR. This restricts their choice as to price and location.

It is important to bear in mind that one could place Tibetans in great difficulties if trying to stay with them.

Tibetan prefectures and counties

These tables show the names of all counties in the People's Republic of China that are in Tibetan autonomous areas or, in eastern Qinghai, areas which have a significant Tibetan population. Column one gives the romanised Tibetan names. The second column gives the Chinese names in pinyin.

Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR)

Chamdo prefecture	Changdu	Nagchu	Naqu
Bitu	Bitu	Nyanrong	Nierong
Chamdo	Changdu	Nyima	Nima
Dengchen	Dingqing	Palgon	Bange
Dragyab	Chaya	Shantsa	Shenza
Dzogang	Zuogang	Sog	Suo
Gonjo	Gongjue	Ngari prefecture	Ali
Jomda	Jiangda	Gar	Ge'er
Lhorong	Luolong	Gergye	Geji
Markham	Mangkang	Gertse	Gaize
Palbar	Bianba	Lungkar	Longge'er
Pashoe	Basu	Purang	Pulan
Riwoche	Leiwuqi	Ruthog	Ritu
Srida	Shengda	Tsamda	Zhada
Thopa	Tuoba	Tsochen	Cuoqin
Yanjin	Yanjing	Nyingtri/Kongpo	Lingzhi/Gongbu
Lhasa Municipality	Lasa shi	Dzayul	Chayu
Chushur	Chushui	Kongpo Gyamda	Gongbu Jiangda
Damshung	Dangxiang	Metog/Pema Koe	Motuo
Lhasa	Lasa	Miling/Manling	Milin
Lhundrub	Lingzhi	Nang	Lang
Maldrogongkar	Mozhugongka	Nyingtri	Lingzhi
Nyemo	Nimu	Pome	Bomi
Tagtse	Dazi	Shigatse	Rigaze
Toelung Dechen	Duilongdeqing	Dingkye	Dingjie
Lhoka prefecture	Shannan	Dingri	Dingri
Chonggye	Qiongjie	Dromo	Yadong
Chusum	Qusong	Drongpa	Zhongba
Dranang	Zanang	Gampa	Gangba
Gongkar	Gongga	Gyantse	Jiangzi
Gyatsa	Jiacha	Khangmar	Kangma
Lhodrag	Luoza	Kyirong	Jilong
Lhuntse	Longzi	Lhatse	Lazi
Nakartse	Langkazi	Namling	Nanmulin
Nedong	Naidong	Ngamring	Angren
Tsome	Cuomei	Nyalam	Nielamu
Tsona	Cuona	Panam	Bailang
Zangri	Sangri	Rinpung	Renbu
Nagchu prefecture	Naqu	Saga	Saga
Amdo	Anduo	Sakya	Sajia
Drachen	Baqing	Shigatse	Rigaze
Driru	Biru	Zhethongmon	Xietongmen
Lhari	Jiali		

Yunnan Province

Dechen Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture	Deqin
Balung	Weixi
Dechen	Deqin
Gyalthang	Zhongdian

Qinghai Province

Golog Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture	Guoluo
Chigdril	Jiuzhi
Darlag	Dari
Gade	Gande
Machen	Maqin
Matoe	Maduo
Pema	Banma
Malho Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture	Huanguan
Chentsa	Jianza
Rebgong	Tongren
Tsekhog	Zeku
Yulgan/Sogpo Mongolian Autonomous County	Henan
Tsoshar prefecture	Haidong
Bayan Hui Autonomous County	Hualong
Drotsang	Ledu
Gonlung Tu Autonomous County	Huzhu
Kamalog Hui Autonomous County	Minhe
Kumbum Tongkor	Huangzhong
Tsongkhakhar	Pingan
Yadzi/Dowi Salar Autonomous County	Xunhua
Tsojang Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture	Haibei
Chilen/Dola	Qilian
Hiyon/Dashi	Haiyan
Kangtsa	Gangca
Tsolho Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture	Hainan
Chabcha	Gonghe
Gepasumdo/Thunte	Tongde
Mangra/Konan	Guinan
Trika	Guide
Tsigorthang/Zhinghe	Xinghai
Tsonub Mongolian & Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture	Haixi

Nagormo (Golmud) Municipality	Ge'ermu
Terlenkha Municipality	Delingha
Themchen	Tianjun
Tulan	Dulan
Wulan	Wulan
Xining Municipality	Xining Shi
Siling	Xining
Serkhog Hui & Tu Autonomous County	Datong
Yushu Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture	Yushu
Chumarleb	Qumalai
Dritoe	Zhiduo
Kyegudo/Jyekundo	Yushu/Jiegu
Nangchen	Nangqian
Tridu	Chengduo
Zatoe	Zaduo

Gansu Province

Kanlho Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture	Gannan
Chone	Zhuoni
Drugchu	Zhouqu
Lintan	Lintan
Luchu	Luqu
Machu	Maqu
Sangchu/Labrang	Xiahe
Thewo	Diebu
Tsoe	Hezuo
Wuwei prefecture	Wuwei prefecture
Pari Tibetan Autonomous County	Tianzhu

Sichuan Province

Kardze Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture	Ganzi
Bathang	Batang
Chagzam	Luding
Chatreng	Xiangcheng
Dabpa	Daocheng
Dartsedo	Kangding
Dawu	Daofu
Dege	Dege
Derong	Derong
Draggo	Luhuo
Gyeczur/Gyazil	Jiulong

Kardze	Ganzi
Lithang	Litang
Nyagchu	Yajiang
Nyarong	Xinlong
Palyul	Baiyu
Sershul	Shiqu
Serthar	Seda
Tenpa/Rongtrag	Danba
Liangshan Yi Autonomous Prefecture	Liangshan
Mili Tibetan Autonomous County	Muli
Ngaba Qiang & Tibetan Autonomous Prefecture	Aba

Barkham	Ma'erkang
Chuchen	Jinchuan
Dzamthang	Rangtang
Dzoegé	Ruo'ergai
Hungyon/Kakhog	Hongyuan
Li/Tashiling	Lixian
Lunggu	Wenchuan
Maowun	Maoxian
Namphing/Namphel	Nanping
Ngaba	Aba
Trochu	Heishui
Tsenlha	Xiaojin
Zungchu	Songpan

Map of Tibet



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TIN Publications



Mining Tibet: Mineral exploitation in Tibetan areas of the PRC

Exploitation of mineral resources has been central to Beijing's Tibet policy since the founding of the People's Republic of China. Today, China is making unprecedented efforts to open up the Tibetan plateau to large-scale exploitation. The Chinese state claims ownership of all mineral resources in Tibet, precluding any real economic autonomy for Tibetans on the basis of resource exploitation. This extensive report of 216 pages analyses the environmental, socio-economic, political and human rights issues surrounding mining in Tibet. (November 2002).

ISBN: 0-9541961-2-0

Published by TIN December 2002

216 pages with a fold out map

£16.00 / US\$25.60 / €25.00 plus packing and postage



Delivery and Deficiency: Health and Health care in Tibet

— is the first part of a major investigation of health and health care in Tibet, which will form one of TIN's most important and influential projects. Part one introduces the health care system and main health issues in Tibet. Subsequent issues of the series will address particular health and health care issues in detail, such as HIV/AIDS and the work of foreign NGOs. (November 2002).

ISBN: 0-9541961-3-9

Published by TIN November 2002

88 pages

£12.00 / US\$19.00 / €19.00 plus packing and postage



In the Interests of the State: Hostile Elements III – Political Imprisonment in Tibet, 1987-2001

— continues TIN's scrutiny of political imprisonment in Tibet, drawing on our unique prisoner database. It examines the reasons behind the significant decline in political prisoners in Tibet, concluding that this decline does not suggest that Tibetans are satisfied with Chinese rule and policy, or have cast aside conviction in their beliefs. Instead, many Tibetans are now attempting to employ strategies that bolster Tibetan language, culture, religion and self-identity without risking imprisonment. (Published July 2002).

ISBN: 0-9541961-1-2

Published by TIN June 2002

108 pages

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Forthcoming Publications

Health and Health care in Tibet, part II, will examine the cultural, social and political issues surrounding the use of traditional Tibetan medicine (TTM) as part of the health care system of contemporary Tibet. It will explore the effects of the recent commercialisation and liberalisation that has taken place in Tibet on TTM and the ideological struggles involved with its acceptance by the Chinese authorities.

To be published in November 2003.

Music in Contemporary Tibet, an illustrated book of around 100 pages, will make a unique contribution to the understanding of the politics and issues of cultural and national identity surrounding music in contemporary Tibet. To be published in December 2003.

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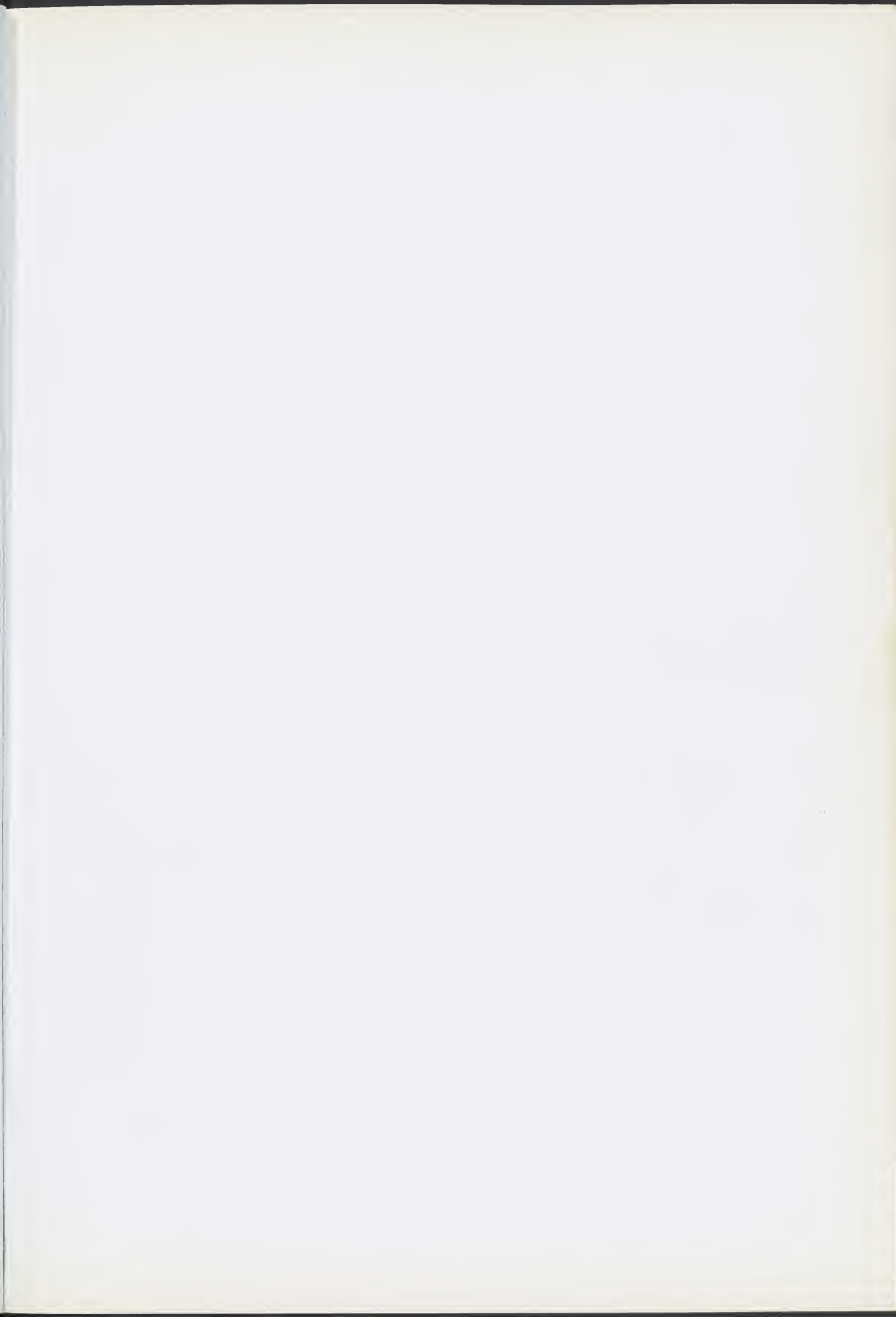
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Tibet 2002. A Yearbook includes a comprehensive selection of News Updates and Special Reports published during the year 2002 by Tibet Information Network. In addition, there are new TIN analyses and previously unpublished source material, including photographs, translations of official documents and interviews with Tibetans.

The issues covered in this yearbook include:

- The releases of the Tibetan political prisoners Ngawang Choephel, Tagna Jigme Zangpo, Ngawang Sangdrol and Ngawang Choezom.
- The upgrading of repressive infrastructures, such as the enlargement of existing prison facilities and the strengthening of border controls to Nepal.
- The return of Lama Jigme Phuntsog to the Serthar Buddhist Institute.
- The first visit to Tibet and China of a delegation of envoys of the Dalai Lama since 1993.
- The development of Tibetan livelihoods under the 'Western development drive'.
- The continuing destruction of cultural monuments in the Tibetan capital, Lhasa.
- The dismantling of Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche's religious and charitable network in the Lithang area following accusations of 'terrorist' activities.

The **Reference Section** at the end of the volume provides general information about contemporary Tibet.

The section includes: a brief chronology of Tibet 1901-2002, an overview of the Tibetan Population in the PRC, a glossary, travel information on Tibet, a list of Tibetan prefectures and counties, a map of Tibet and a bibliography.



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